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A.D. 1431—1605.

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THE
LIVES OF THE POPES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS—PONTIFICATES OF
EUGENIUS IV. AND NICHOLAS V.
A.D. 1431—1455.

No empire, of ancient or modern times, has experienced such marvellous and varied vicissitudes as those which have befallen the empire of the Roman church. Born in obscurity, and reared in adversity, that church nevertheless succeeded in climbing to a loftier throne, and grasping the sceptre of a more absolute dominion, than either a Xerxes or an Alexander could boast. Pretending to despise mere worldly gains, she cunningly turned the channels of riches towards herself, and emptied them without scruple into the reservoirs of her own wealth. When the day of her humiliation had arrived, and her intolerable arrogance and selfishness provoked fierce vengeance from the indignant world, she did not, like other empires, fall beneath the violent blow. Just for

a moment she reeled and recoiled, but it was only to gather new strength and return to her former position. When the German thought to bind her with imperial ordinances and laws, she proudly snapped asunder these "withes of the Philistines," and proclaimed herself superior to all secular control. When the Albigenian Christians hoped to undermine her authority by laying bare her corruptness to the gaze of the world, she was able, and did not shrink from commanding fire and sword to destroy the presumptuous heretics, and set her free from their annoying and dangerous scrutiny. When the French king, Philip the Fair, resentful of her lordly assumptions, dared to degrade and imprison one of her haughtiest pontiffs, and so tampered with the cardinals that they were content to endure a base captivity at Avignon, submitting their high functions to the unhallowed rule of a mere temporal sovereign, there was still vigour enough left in "the church" to wipe off the ignominy and retrieve the disaster. She brought back her chieftains from their "Babylon of bondage," and in spite of schisms within, and new forms of hostility without, engendered by the learning that was now diffusing itself all around, she re-established them on their ancient throne, and re-invested them with no mean share of their ancient power.

And although in the century we are now, in these historical sketches, approaching, a heavier shock was given to the Roman church

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

than she had ever sustained before, we shall find that, notwithstanding her manifest degeneracy, her strength was far from exhausted. Within herself she yet possessed the means of resisting all her foes, and of once again inducing a large portion of the human family to yield her a devoted allegiance. The REFORMATION, which wrested from Rome the two richest provinces of her empire, was succeeded by a REACTION, which at least checked the progress of her ruin, and established on a firmer basis than ever the authority she still retained. To a Roman Catholic, this momentous era in the history of his church is fraught with the most painful and humiliating, as well as some of the most triumphant reminiscences of her whole eventful career. To us, the collisions between Rome and the Protestant churches in the sixteenth century are far more interesting than all the other struggles of the papal church, and they will therefore detain us a proportionable time.

It will be manifest, as this narrative proceeds, that much of Rome's wonderful vitality is attributable to the characters of the men who successively occupied her throne. But we shall assuredly find that whilst some great men impressed the stamp of their greatness upon the age in which they lived, and on the institutions they governed, it was a Greater than any human hand that secretly and potently directed the current of events, making even the selfish papal imposture subservient to the

highest and most glorious designs. Again and again are we taught the profound truthfulness of the declaration, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it *the basest of men.*"

The pontificate of EUGENIUS IV., who succeeded Martin v. in 1431, was distracted by the dissensions which prevailed both in the church and in the secular dominions of the pope. A war broke out between Eugenius and some of the baronial houses of Rome, in the vicissitudes of which the latter were well nigh destroyed, and the pontiff was once compelled to flee from Rome and seek safety in a neighbouring city. But the proceedings in the Council of Basel, convened by his predecessor, rendered the pontificate of Eugenius so excessively stormy. That council boldly declared its superiority to papal mandates, and would not even admit the pope's legates until they had sworn obedience to all its decrees. It then hastened to enact statutes abolishing annates, reservations, and other lucrative but tyrannical prerogatives of the popedom. To such daring innovations no pontiff could be expected to submit, and least of all Eugenius, who was as proud and passionate as he was ignorant and weak. He summoned a new council at Florence; whereupon the Council of Basel elected a new pope, and all the fierceness of the former schism was revived. The contest between these rival popes and councils was

rapidly rising, and would soon have endangered the unity of the church, if the death of Eugenius, in 1447, had not given an opportunity for choosing a successor to the tiara in whom all parties could unite.

With the accession of NICHOLAS V. a season of comparative peace was ushered in. This pontiff had raised himself from rank to rank in the church chiefly by his studious and literary habits. On being recommended to Eugenius iv., he had at once received a cardinal's hat; but there it seemed probable that his exaltation would cease, as many other members of the college were powerful by their connexions, while he was only the son of a physician. By an accident, however, their votes united in him, and he commenced his pontificate with promises of establishing peace and promoting learning. The latter part of his engagement he fulfilled; the former was beyond his power.

The love of liberty which Petrarch had infused into the Roman people, and which Rienzi's brilliant though short career had so largely developed, had not yet become extinct. They often rebelled against the tyranny of the popes, but were not stedfast enough to succeed in throwing off their yoke. In the interval that elapsed between the death of Eugenius and the election of Nicholas, a noble and honourable Roman, Stefano Porcari, urged his countrymen to oblige the new pontiff to promise and secure to them constitutional liberty. The fickle or frivolous temper of the people prevented his

success, and Nicholas therefore assumed the tiara with a deep-rooted prejudice against Porcari, and with such unlimited power, that he banished him almost immediately to the city of Bologna.

Porcari, however, found frequent opportunities of escaping to Rome, where he stirred up his partisans to attempt a general revolt. Nicholas, hearing of the plot, became apprehensive that his life was in peril, and, from being mild and confiding, grew timid and ferocious. He stained his hands with the blood of the imprudent Porcari, whose sentiments were patriotic and noble, but whose judgment was heated and rash. The patriot was sentenced without trial, and, together with nine of his confederates, was hanged from the battlements of St. Angelo. This cruel transaction was followed by continual acts of severity and injustice; so that the reign of Nicholas, although peaceful in relation to other states, was one of perpetual cabals and terror at home.

The revolt of Porcari was the last effervescence of the republican spirit in Rome, which has continued till the present century in resigned submission to pontifical rule. In the year 1452, the emperor Frederic III. alarmed the citizens by a visit, but his intentions were wholly pacific. His only request was that he might receive the honour of coronation from papal hands; and this was the last instance of a German emperor crossing the Alps for so servile and unnecessary a purpose.

When free from those alarms which had transformed a naturally amiable disposition into one of a suspicious and even tyrannical kind, Nicholas employed himself in pursuits which were as useful to the world as they were congenial to his own taste. In his encouragement of learning, he was as splendidly munificent as his own friend and early patron Cosmo de' Medici, the "pater patriæ" of Florence. The papal court was crowded with men of letters who were fostered by his bounty. He founded the Vatican library, and contributed to its stores above five thousand manuscripts, which were collected at his expense, and in part by his own research. A greater number of the Greek classics were translated into Latin by his command than in all the five centuries preceding his elevation. His patronage of the arts was equally generous. The remarkable monuments of the metropolis were preserved and cherished by his enthusiastic admiration; the churches were repaired and embellished; and the erection of many superb structures attested at once the magnificence of his spirit and the refinement of his taste. Happy should we be to record of so noble a mind that it gave evidence also of having been purified by the grace of God; but alas! this, the crowning virtue, without which all others are comparatively worthless, was the only one of which Nicholas appeared to be destitute. He had not learned to forsake all and follow Christ.

From his literary pursuits, the pontiff

was suddenly called off by the appalling announcement that Constantinople had fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks. With the gradual decay of the Greek empire, the insolence and encroachments of this warlike people had kept equal pace. In vain had the emperor Constantine Palæologus sought to propitiate the young and ambitious Sultan Mohammed II. Certain of the weakness of the Greeks, (or, as they still chose to be called, *the Romans*,) Mohammed coolly transported his troops across the Bosphorus, and erected a fortress on its western shore. Issuing thence, with all the munitions of war, in the summer of 1453, he encamped before the walls of Constantinople, and took it, after an obstinate resistance of fifty-three days. In this siege, the artillery of ancient and modern times was combined both in the assault and the defence, thus marking in a singular manner the stage at which the progress of civilization had arrived. The "Greek fire" and the cross-bow were used by the besieged, together with the rude hand-gun and perhaps the arquebus; while in the camp of the besiegers, the catapult and battering-ram stood side by side with the large cannons contrived for the express occasion by the Turks. Mohammed is said to have constructed a cannon by which a ball of six hundred pounds' weight was driven the distance of a mile, falling then with such force as to sink a fathom deep in the ground. By this mingled species of artillery, a breach was at last effected in the stubborn walls of the city, and in the

conflict that ensued, the unhappy emperor finally fell. A large part of Europe thus passed into Ottoman hands, and the beautiful church of San Sophia was forthwith transformed into a Mohammedan mosque.

Apprehensive that the success of the conqueror would tempt him to extend his ravages, and perhaps even to aim at the capture of the more ancient metropolis of the Roman empire, the pope endeavoured to revive amongst the faithful the crusading spirit of former days. In Germany, the eloquence of Æneas Sylvius was employed to inflame the people; but with very indifferent results. In Italy, a hermit named Simonet was more successful. By his earnestness and activity, he prevailed on the Italian cities to suspend their quarrels, and unite in the common cause. But ere the intended armament could be prepared, Nicholas was taken dangerously ill, and after much suffering expired. His confessions are fraught with instruction to the worldly and ambitious. "Gladly," said he, "would I resign the pontificate if I dared, and become once more Thomas of Sarzana. Under that simple name I had more enjoyment in a single day, than any year has since afforded me."

CHAPTER II.

ALARM OF TURKISH INVASION—CONSPIRACY OF THE
PAZZI.

A.D. 1455—1484.

THE successor of Nicholas was Alphonso Borgia, a Spaniard, and who assumed, with the tiara, the title of CALIXTUS III. His short reign of three years produced no remarkable event, and his name might be passed over in silence but for the "bad eminence" it has reached through the infamous life of Roderic Borgia, who was either his nephew or his son. Of that infamy Calixtus III. justly deserves a share, for he basely used the pontificate for the mere purpose of advancing his nephew, and other equally depraved relatives, to seats of wealth and power. On them he exhausted the papal treasures, and diverted to family aggrandizement the riches that he had sworn to use for the good of a vast community.

A little before his death, Calixtus received a deputation from Germany, complaining of papal exactions, and Æneas Sylvius, formerly the emperor's but now the pope's secretary, forgetful of his obligations to the German nation, took this occasion of flattering the pontiff by stoutly opposing the claims of the delegates. He advocated, with his usual skill and eloquence, the demands of the pope upon the German bishops, and was rewarded by immediate elevation to the purple. It is difficult to believe that this was the same man who, at the Council of Basel,

had so zealously contended that the authority of a council was superior to that of a pope, and that the latter was "rather to be regarded as the vicar of the church than as the vicar of Christ." But such is the alchymy of ambition—the transmuting power of selfish worldliness.

Perhaps it was the advanced age, as much as the high reputation of Æneas Sylvius, that recommended him to the college, as the most eligible successor to Calixtus III. on the demise of the latter. Be this as it may, he received a majority of their votes, and immediately adopted the title of Pius II. Had the times been equally favourable, it is probable that the career of Pius II. would have closely resembled that of Nicholas V. The new pontiff was a man of the same tastes, but of even greater abilities and loftier distinction. His poems, letters, and orations, still attest the brilliancy of his genius. On attaining the popedom, his success in diplomacy and his elaborate historical compositions had already established his character for extensive learning, and especially for a just knowledge of mankind. But his talents were destined to be henceforth employed in a direction which rendered them far less useful to the world than they might otherwise have proved.

The nearer approach of the Turks to the shores of the Adriatic had thoroughly aroused the fears of the pope, and decided him to neglect no means of stirring up Christian opposition to the march of the infidel. With this object in

view, he summoned a council at Mantua, which was largely attended by Italian bishops, and more reluctantly and meagerly by representatives from the other nations of Europe. At this council, the pope exerted all his eloquence to awaken the fears and inflame the zeal of princes and people for the sacred cause. To all appearance he prevailed. The council promised assistance, but separated to forget their promise. It was at this council that Pius took occasion to recant and reprobate sentiments respecting the popedom which he had held in his earlier days. "An execrable abuse," said he, "unheard of in ancient times, has gained footing in our days, of presuming to appeal from the pontiff of Rome, the vicar of Jesus Christ, to a council; a practice which every man instructed in law must regard as contrary to the holy canons, and prejudicial to the Christian republic." In an edict subsequently published, he declared that his own defence of such a sentiment at the Council of Basel was owing to ignorance. "Wherefore," he added, "despise those opinions, reject them, and follow that which I now proclaim to you. Believe me now that I am old, rather than when I spoke as a youth; pay more regard to the sovereign pontiff than to the individual; reject *Æneas*, receive Pius." It has been well observed, that "if this change in opinion had been a change to a wiser and better opinion, and not to one so obviously coincident with the pontiff's personal advancement, the sincerity of his pro-

fessions might possibly have been believed." As the case actually stands, there can hardly be a doubt that the pontiff well knew that it was Æneas Sylvius who was right, and Pius II. who was wrong.

There was real sincerity, however, in the pope's dread or hatred of the Turks. Finding the princes of Europe too busily engaged in putting down domestic seditions to think much of a distant foe, Pius resolved to rebuke their remissness by setting them an example in person. "If they will not attend when we say, *Go*," exclaimed he, "they perhaps may if we say, *Come*. We will ourselves march against the Turks; not that we propose to draw the sword; but after the example of Moses, we shall stand on some lofty galley or mountain's brow, and holding the eucharist before our eyes, implore Christ to grant safety and victory to our contending forces." In the summer of 1464, Pius, although suffering severely from illness and the infirmities of age, actually set out to join a considerable body of troops lying at Ancona. He was borne on a litter, and was conveyed by slow journeys to the place of rendezvous. On arriving at Ancona, he found a multitude of ill-armed and ill-disciplined soldiers, who seemed to have little enthusiasm in the great cause they had espoused. Disappointment and mortification, in all probability, hastened his end, and on the twelfth of August, pope Pius II. expired.

PAUL II., a Venetian, was immediately elected

to be the next wearer of the tiara. In early life he had been a merchant, and had not turned his thoughts to study until his uncle or father, pope Eugenius iv., had unexpectedly attained the popedom, and so given an ambitious direction to his desires. In entering upon office, he solemnly pledged himself to continue the enterprise of the late pope against the Turks ; but he soon made it evident that there were other objects much nearer to his heart. Carefully conciliating the cardinals by granting them various favours, among which was the childish one of permitting them to wear mitres made of silk, and to adorn their horses with scarlet trappings, he ventured to employ the treasures which had been gathered by his predecessors for the Turkish crusade, in rewarding the persecutors of the Hussites in Bohemia ; so that the sufferings of that unhappy people were greatly aggravated, and the flames of civil war raged with renewed fury.

At home, Paul displayed himself as the enemy of all learning, and the patron of whatever was frivolous and low. He delighted in shows and spectacles, and his biographer indignantly describes a general racing amusement which was devised for the pleasure of this *venerable* pontiff. " All raced—old men, middle-aged men, young men, and Jews ; the latter, however, were well drenched before they started, that they might not run so fast. Horses raced, mares, asses, and buffaloes ; and at all this racing the populace were so much amused, that they could hardly

keep on their feet for laughing. The pope took his station at the church of S. Marco, and after the race was over, he rewarded all, down to the little boys, covered as they were with dirt and perspiration, with a carlino apiece."

Even in these contemptible sports the wanton cruelty of this pope's temper discovered itself in his usage of the Jews; and the memory of Paul is rendered not merely despicable, but hateful, by his persecution of learned men, whose learning alone made them odious and suspicious in his eyes. His grasping ambition, moreover, led him to seek, by the most disgraceful means, to subjugate the district of Rimini, and he was thus brought into collision with the rising house of the Medici, of which the "Magnificent Lorenzo" was then the chief representative. Paul died in 1471, too early to reap the advantage of an alteration which he had characteristically made, by which the jubilees were to recur every twenty-fifth year.

SIXTUS IV., the successor of Paul, commenced his pontificate by professing to adopt the policy of Pius II. He loudly demanded that the decrees of the Mantuan council against the Turks should be carried into effect; and promised indulgences to all who would join in the crusade. But finding that his exhortations were coldly received, Sixtus quickly grew apathetic in the cause, and resigned himself entirely to those schemes of selfish and criminal aggrandizement which now continually disgraced the papal chair.

Lorenzo de' Medici was at this time the absolute ruler of Florence, and on many accounts the most remarkable man of his day. His mercantile successes had excited the envy of another Florentine family, the Pazzi, who removed from Florence to Rome that they might not be offended by the greatness or the pride of their rival. This enmity led ultimately to very tragical results, in which Sixtus iv. was deeply involved. The pontiff had several illegitimate sons, whom to enrich and advance was his most anxious concern. He had seized on the estates of one of the nobles of Romagna, intending to confer them on one of these children, Giuliano della Rovere; when Lorenzo interfered on behalf of the injured man. That he might further insure the tranquillity of Italy against the ambitious designs of the pope, De' Medici united Florence in a solemn league with the states of Milan and Venice. The wrath of Sixtus at these measures knew no bounds, and he now engaged the Pazzi, whose hostility to the Medici was no secret, to become the instrument of his vengeance. A plot was soon contrived for the assassination of Lorenzo's whole family, in which the archbishop of Pisa engaged also to bear a part. With the most atrocious and revolting coolness was this plot matured. The assassination was fixed for a Sunday, when high mass would be celebrated at the church of San Reparata at Florence; and when the brothers Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici were almost sure to be present. At the commencement of

the service, Giuliano had not arrived, and one of the Pazzi hastened to his house, and pretending a return of old friendliness, besought him to accompany him to mass. He even placed his arms around his victim as if playfully to draw him to the church, but really to feel if he wore any kind of armour beneath his dress. Giuliano was persuaded, and soon filled his usual station by his brother's side near to the high altar. All things were now ready; and the conspirators gathered around the unconscious brothers. At the moment that the priest raised the consecrated wafer, the assassins rushed on their victims. Giuliano fell, pierced with wounds; but Lorenzo, having received only a slight scar in the neck, stood on his defence till help was procured, and the murderers either despatched on the spot, or safely secured. It was then found that the archbishop of Pisa had gone in the meantime to the palace of the Medici, intending to seize on the government. In this attempt he was baffled, and so enraged were the people, that without waiting for the form of a trial, or even divesting him of his official robes, they hung the archbishop at one of the windows of the palace—a fate which some of the Pazzi shared.

The pope did not conceal his chagrin at the failure of the plot; and immediately declared war against Lorenzo, placing Florence under the censure of the church. For two years did this man fill northern Italy with bloodshed and terror; but the news that the Turkish conqueror

had at last reached Italy, and had actually taken Otranto, brought the frenzied pontiff to his senses, and compelled at least a temporary peace between the conflicting states. But Sixtus passed the remainder of his life in the indulgence of the same passions, and the pursuit of the same ends. To aggrandize his worthless relatives, and gratify his fierce animosities, he shrank from no crime, and his last emotion was one of regret that he was compelled to leave Italy at peace. He died in 1484.

CHAPTER III.

THE PAPACY REACHES ITS CLIMAX OF CORRUPTION—
SAVANOROLA—THE BORGAS.

A.D. 1484—1503.

INNOCENT VIII. was the next link in this papal chain of ignominy, crime, and horror. And although he proved himself as feeble and indolent as his predecessor had been headstrong and restless, yet his tastes were of the same kind, and his reign was as prejudicial to the welfare of the world. He had spent a dissipated life, and his most earnest wish was to enrich the seven children whom he publicly acknowledged as the result of his various amours. During the pontificate of Innocent, extortion, unblushing venality, and open debauchery were the reproach of the papal court. Innocent was not adapted by nature for warlike pursuits, yet so eager was

he to increase his power and wealth, that when the barons of Naples, groaning under the iron yoke of their tyrannical princes, offered to place the kingdom under the immediate government of the pope, he instantly countenanced the revolt, although he lay under many obligations to Ferdinand the reigning king. The struggle was unsuccessful; and alarmed at the approach of Ferdinand to the Roman territory, Innocent sought the good offices of Lorenzo de' Medici to effect a reconciliation between himself and the Neapolitan king. From this time, Lorenzo acquired unbounded ascendancy over the weak pontiff; and to his talents and genius is to be ascribed the temporary repose which Italy now enjoyed. Lorenzo did not, however, use his influence solely for his country's good. His measures were often dictated by mere policy and ambition, and he did not lose any opportunity of advancing his own family. One of his daughters was now married to a natural son of the pope, and another child, Giovanni, was admitted at the ridiculous age of thirteen into the college of cardinals.

But the most disgraceful event of Innocent's reign was the impulse which he gave to the sanguinary persecutions of the Waldenses of Piedmont. The bull which he issued for this purpose exhorts "all bishops, together with the princes of France," to take up arms against that innocent people, and to "tread them under foot as venomous adders." The response to this bull was as fierce and savage as its bigoted authors

could have desired. The inhabitants of the valleys were hunted to the mountain caves to which they fled for refuge, and the mouths of the caverns were stopped up with large piles of wood which were immediately set on fire. Amongst the crowds thus cruelly suffocated were four hundred infants in their cradles or at their mothers' breasts. Multitudes of both sexes, and of all ages, were hurled over the rocks and dashed in pieces: and altogether three thousand thus perished at the hands of their brutal persecutors.

Roderic Borgia was the successor of Innocent in 1492, and on assuming the tiara he took the name of ALEXANDER VI. He was the son of pope Calixtus III., and the fit successor of Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII. In his character we find at last the extreme limit of papal depravity, and in his history we seem to fathom the lowest abyss of human baseness. If murder, incest, adultery, relentless cruelty, and shameless perfidy never before met in a single individual, in the life of this pope they all found a place, and that with frequent repetition. "He entered on his office," says a contemporary writer, "with the meekness of an ox, but he administered it with the fierceness of a lion." His intellectual qualities, which were not despicable, were far more than counterbalanced by his vices, and, indeed, were merely the instruments of the latter. A Romanist historian testifies that "in his manners he was most shameless; wholly divested of sincerity, decency, and truth; with-

out fidelity or religion ; immoderate in avarice ; insatiable in ambition ; more than barbarous in cruelty ; passionately eager, by any means whatsoever, to exalt his children, some of whom were as detestable as their father." The life of such a man can be but a mere catalogue of crimes, and it could only gratify a prurient curiosity to give a minute account of the deeds of this monster in human form.

The early part of Alexander's pontificate was disturbed by an invasion of Italy by the French, under Charles VIII., who laid claim to the throne of Naples. The French monarch passed through Tuscany and sat down before the walls of Rome, but Alexander, who had hitherto vigorously opposed the object of the invader, now thought it best to adopt a conciliatory policy ; and receiving Charles in due state, entertained him for a month before he renewed his march. The expedition of the French monarch ended in his making a nominal conquest of Naples, and in his suffering the loss of almost his entire army by their ungovernable licentiousness and their harassing travel. But the results of this invasion were to be felt in Italy for many years to come.

To ecclesiastical affairs Alexander paid just so much attention as sufficed to advance his own worldly interests, or to aid in the indulgence of his lusts. He cloaked, yet scarcely concealed his abandoned habits beneath the veil of his priestly office, and abused that office in the most shocking manner for the purpose of swell-

ing the revenues of the papal treasury. The priesthood found their account in pandering to the superstitions of the people. Indulgences for all sorts of sins were never so eagerly bought, and the clergy were never so zealous in promoting their sale as now that they were encouraged by the example of their ecclesiastical chief. To Alexander VI. belongs the shame of being the first pope who officially declared, that souls supposed to be expiating in the fires of purgatory their transgressions and crimes on earth could be released by the will of the church, and that papal indulgences would thus avail, not only the purchaser himself, but also those deceased relations of whose happiness he might entertain doubts.

It was only to be expected that so mercenary and profane an abuse of all sacred and holy things should arouse the indignation of truly devout men. Amongst these, the reformer of Florence, Girolamo Savanorola, was the most conspicuous and daring. He did not hesitate to denounce from the pulpit all the vices of the time, and even rebuked his patron, Lorenzo de' Medici, for the countenance he gave to the corrupt morals of the people. It would be too much to affirm that Savanorola was a reformer of the same class with Luther and Calvin, yet his efforts were prompted by the same convictions as theirs, and, in proportion to his knowledge of the truth, were directed to the same ends. His strong political feelings, however, diverted him from that singleness of aim by which

these other reformers were distinguished. To the vehement excitements of party must also be ascribed that decidedly fanatical complexion which the conduct of Savanorola eventually assumed. It was great matter of rejoicing to the corrupt priesthood to find that their enemy had suffered himself to fall into this trap, and it must be equally a cause of regret to sincere Christians, that the memory of so bold a reformer should be tarnished by delusions and extravagances so gross. Indignant at the tyranny of the Medici, Savanorola proposed the expulsion of that family, and the formation of a republic, of which *Jesus Christ* should be the head. A coin still exists which was struck by his orders, bearing on one side the Florentine *fleur-de-lis*, with the motto, "The senate and people of Florence," and on the other a cross, with the words, "Jesus Christ our king." Proceedings so rash soon exposed Savanorola to the malicious designs of his foes. The fickle populace were induced to give him up to the emissaries of the pope, and these soon finished his career by condemning him to die the death of a heretic. He was burned in the streets of Florence, and, that no relics might be preserved, his ashes were thrown into the Arno.

The offices of the church were, now more than ever, regarded as mere secular property. They were bought and sold without shame; and all orders, from pope to priest, kept up the disgraceful traffic. "What a spectacle," says a Roman prelate of that time, "is this desolation

of the churches ! All the flocks are abandoned by their shepherds ; they are given over to the care of hirelings !” A bishopric was the prize, not of the worthiest, but of the richest ; it belonged to him who was best able to purchase it. The owners of church dignities bestowed them without pausing to inquire whether their favourites possessed either piety or good morals. The pope, beyond them all, was intent on enriching his own family, and his profligate sons held the highest and most lucrative offices it was in his power to confer.

The favourite son of Alexander vi. was Cæsar Borgia, a son, the very image of his sire. Although holding a seat in the college of cardinals, he had no relish for ecclesiastical life. Possessed of great courage and considerable military skill, Cæsar turned soldier, and employed force to give effect to the machinations of his father. Their united aim was to destroy as many as they could of the Romanese nobles, and seize on their estates, so that when the popedom should depart from their family, the house of Borgia should still be amongst the greatest in Italy. In pursuance of this policy, Cæsar Borgia first captured the city of Piombino ; then marched against the duke of Urbino, and driving him forth, took possession of his duchy, containing four cities, and thirty fortified places. He finally attacked the states of Camerino, which he also reduced to subjection, after treacherously putting to death the heirs of Giulio di Varano, the lord of that territory.

From one stroke of ambition he proceeded to another, until the pontiff proposed to the college to confer on him the title of *king* of Romagna and Umbria.

It was certainly not the crimes of Borgia that prevented this proposal from being adopted, for his public outrages had been surpassed by the enormities of his earlier life, and he yet retained his cardinal's hat. He was even accused, and not without reason, of having murdered his own brother, the duke of Gandia. The two brothers had been to the house of their mother Vanozza to sup, and left together at a late hour. Next morning, the duke of Gandia was missing, and some fishermen dragging the Tiber found his body pierced with nine wounds, while its dress and ornaments were untouched. Jealousy of his brother's titles and prospective honours are supposed to have incited Cæsar to the deed.

But, though not restrained from elevating Borgia to royalty by any sense of his real demerits, the cardinals were prevented by a more potent argument; for the death of the pontiff himself occurred while the question was held in debate. The end of Alexander VI. was a meet sequel to his life. Borgia and the pope had plotted to poison a rich cardinal that they might lay hands on his wealth. The whole body of cardinals were therefore invited to a banquet, and among the wines provided was one bottle of poison carefully prepared and set apart. But the pope and his son coming in

before supper called for some wine, and a servant presented them by mistake with the bottle containing the poison. Borgia had largely diluted his wine, and being young and vigorous, he recovered under the use of proper antidotes ; but Alexander died the same evening,—a remarkable example of Divine retribution ! *

CHAPTER IV.

PIUS III.—THE WARS OF JULIUS II.—HIS PATRONAGE
OF ART.

A.D. 1503—1513.

To the monster of depravity whose life we have briefly sketched in the foregoing chapter, succeeded Pius III. He was the nephew of Pius II., that Æneas Sylvius who acted so important a part in the Council of Basel. The new pontiff inherited some of his uncle's nobler qualities, and, indeed, was so esteemed for his virtue that great hopes were formed of him. But although the possession of a character of such rare excellence was a good argument for the elevation of the new pontiff, it was by no means the real ground of his election. Behind this plausible pretence, the cardinal della Rovere, whose

* The contemporary historian, Guicciardini, declares that "all Rome rushed to St. Peter's with incredible delight to behold his corpse, nor was there any man who could satiate his eyes with gazing on that serpent, which, by his unbounded ambition, his pestiferous perfidy, his frightful cruelties of all kinds, his monstrous lust, his unheard-of avarice, and his unscrupulous trafficking with things sacred and profane, had impoisoned the whole world !"

influence had decided the conclave, concealed other motives of a purely selfish nature. That cardinal, who, it will be remembered, was deeply implicated with Sixtus IV. in the conspiracy of the Pazzi, and whose hands were therefore stained with the blood of a murdered man, was secretly plotting the attainment of the tiara for himself, and, because the time was not yet fully ripe, supported the pretensions of Pius III., an infirm and sickly old man, who was not likely to hold his dignities inconveniently long. In fact, Pius died a month after his exaltation; and whether his end was occasioned by poison, as rumour averred, or by a natural decay, the event was, unquestionably, the most opportune that could have happened for the wily and subtle cardinal della Rovere. He had by this time gained over the whole college to his interest, and the obsequies of the late pope were no sooner over than Giuliano della Rovere was chosen his successor.

JULIUS II. was the title the new pontiff assumed; to indicate, as some say, his preference for the regal and military to the ecclesiastical character. Ambitious, bold, reckless, and grasping, Julius had little sympathy with the sensual vices of Alexander VI., and yet the aspect of the papacy was in no degree improved. The whole ten years of this pontificate were devoted to frauds and stratagems, and deeds of violence and injustice.

The pope's first effort was to appropriate some of the cities of Romagna, and incorporate

them with the states of the church. To accomplish this purpose he seized on Cæsar Borgia, who had conquered these cities in the lifetime of his father, and had placed in them creatures of his own, to keep and govern them for him. The pope then announced to these governors that he would give liberty to their leader only when they should have resigned their authority, with the keys of their cities, into the hands of his envoys. By these summary measures, he quickly succeeded in delivering himself from a dangerous subject, (for Borgia instantly quitted Rome for ever,) and likewise in considerably enlarging the papal domains.

The success of his first enterprise emboldened Julius to proceed. The Venetians, the French, and many of the petty sovereignties of Italy, were in turn the objects of pontifical envy or revenge. The pope had a twofold intention—to free Italy from foreign encroachments, and to secure to the popedom a decided pre-eminence among the peninsular powers. Jealousy of the Venetian republic, which was at this time in the zenith of her glory, induced him to join in the League of Cambray, in which the French, German, and Spanish monarchs combined their forces with those of Julius to humble the mistress of the sea. But speedily growing alarmed at the successes of the League, and apprehensive that the French might thus become sole lords of northern Italy, the pontiff changed his policy, was reconciled

to the Venetians, and declared war against the French. In all these operations, moreover, the pope took an active personal part. As if loving the tumultuous camp more than the tranquil palace, he clothed himself in panoply of steel, put himself at the head of his army, and, despising all danger, was often found the foremost in the fray.

In conducting hostilities against the French, Julius, although suffering from illness, had proceeded with some troops to Bologna, and that city being wholly unprepared for defence, he had, on its being attacked by the enemy, a narrow escape from falling into their hands. But his policy was equal to his courage, and he continued to delude the French general with promises and fair speeches, until strong reinforcements arrived and his safety was insured.

Not long after this, we find the energetic and impetuous old man assailing the city of Mirandula, and heedlessly exposing his person to every conceivable peril. Amidst frosts and storms, in the depth of winter, he marched at the head of his forces, directed with his own hands the planting of the artillery, braved the hottest fire of the enemy, and when a breach in the wall was effected, was the first to mount the scaling ladder, sword in hand, and to enter the captured city.

Had the energetic qualities thus exhibited by the pontiff been employed in a worthier cause, and been animated by right principles, the name of Julius II. might well have commanded

our admiration. But, alas! he was stained with vice. His courage and boldness were made the servants of a base ambition, and they often degenerated into rashness and rage, scarcely to be distinguished from madness. His insolence and tyranny were so excessive, that the cities of Italy dreaded to fall into his hands; and when, in one of the numerous vicissitudes of war, the city of Bologna was on one occasion surprised and captured by his antagonists, the inhabitants were so delirious with joy that they rushed in a mass to the great square, in which stood a noble statue of the pontiff which Michael Angelo had founded in brass, and, regardless of its high merit as a masterpiece of art, indignantly hurled it from its pedestal, and dragged it about the streets with every demonstration of hatred and contempt.

Ambition has many forms of development, and in Julius II. it discovered itself in another mode, far less objectionable than these attitudes of menace and deeds of cruelty. The revival of literature had brought with it the renewed cultivation of the arts; and, imitating the conduct of Lorenzo de' Medici, most of the sovereigns of Italy had become patrons of the painters, architects, and sculptors which that age of genius produced in such numbers. The zeal which the pope felt for aggrandizing the patrimony of the church, added to his private ambition, rendered him a munificent patron of all sorts of artists. By their aid he determined

JULIUS II.

so to decorate and enrich the metropolis of the church, as to make Rome the pride of Italy, and the admiration of the world. The reign of Julius II. was therefore, notwithstanding the fact that he was a man of little taste and even of savage propensities, distinguished for the prosperity of the arts.

The architect Bramante was an especial favourite with Julius, by whose orders he executed the great task of uniting the Belvedere with the Vatican, thus giving to the whole the aspect of an imposing and stupendous mass of building, almost without a rival. It was the same architect and the same pontiff who commenced the cathedral of St. Peter's, and it has been declared by competent judges, that, had their design been fully carried out, that triumph of art would have been made yet more astonishing for beauty and majesty than it actually is.

Besides Bramante, the pope patronised the painter Raphael, whom he invited to leave Florence and settle at Rome. During the reign of Julius, Raphael was largely employed in adorning the walls and ceilings of the Vatican with frescoes which are to this day the wonder of mankind.

But the brightest star in all this constellation of genius was unquestionably Michael Angelo, whose powers seemed equally adapted for bearing away the palm either in painting, architecture, or sculpture. Hearing of his marvellous skill, Julius sent for him to Rome, and instructed him to design a mausoleum that

should perpetuate for ages the fame of the Julian pontificate. In this design the mighty master seemed even to surpass himself, and it is confidently asserted that, had it been properly executed, it would have wholly eclipsed every similar edifice of ancient and modern times. Its dimensions were so large that it could not be contained in the old church of St. Peter, and on this account it was that Julius resolved to erect the new cathedral on a nobler scale.

The temper of the pope and that of his favourite artist were not unlike. Both were independent and choleric, and it is related that Angelo, feeling offended at some want of respect shown him on a certain occasion, determined on selling his goods and departing altogether from Rome; he had, in fact, established himself once more in Florence, when messages came from the pope desiring his return. After many refusals, Angelo at last made his appearance again in the Vatican, and the interview between himself and Julius is highly characteristic of the latter. "What then!" said Julius, with an angry look, "instead of coming to seek us, thou wast determined that we should come to seek thee!" A bishop in attendance endeavoured to apologize for the artist. "Who told thee to interfere?" exclaimed the pope, at the same time dealing the prelate a hearty blow with his staff. Then bidding Michael Angelo to kneel, he gave him his benediction in due form, and received him once more into favour.

Another anecdote is told which equally illustrates this pontiff's character. He had given directions to Angelo to make his statue in bronze. The clay model was soon finished and shown to the pope. His attitude was the very expression of majesty, but its face wore so terrible a frown that Julius himself demanded, "Am I uttering a blessing or *a curse?*" Michael Angelo replied that he had intended to represent him pronouncing an admonition, and inquired if he would have a book placed in one of his hands. "Give me *a sword!*" answered the fierce pontiff—"I know nothing of books."

It is clear enough from all this that Julius II. had little of the ecclesiastical character, even as it then prevailed, and of that of piety he gave no traces whatever. The unregenerate heart showed itself without disguise in him. The natural passions were unchecked—were indulged and exhibited even to excess; indeed, the chief use that Julius made of his ecclesiastical position, was to arm himself against his foes with spiritual in addition to carnal weapons. Excommunications, interdicts, and all similar fulminations were freely put in requisition; and their power was not yet so far gone, but that the enemies of Julius trembled before him.

The moral aspect of the Roman church continued unchanged throughout this pontificate. Its abuses were further multiplied, and a little company of cardinals, who were disgusted at the profligacy of the court, and who attempted to hold a council for the reformation of the

church, soon found that, abandoned both by the pope and the people, having neither the sanction of the one nor the confidence of the other, their labours were wholly in vain. It was not from such a quarter that reformation, now so urgently called for, was to proceed.

The death of Julius II., which occurred in 1513, was in mournful harmony with his life, and strongly reminds one of the death of pope Boniface VIII. Even on his dying bed, Julius could not lay aside his schemes of ambition, or the fierce invectives of his violent tongue. "Out of Italy, French! Out, Alphonso of Este!" he shouted with all the energy he could command; and whether we regard these expressions as the effects of delirium, or with Mr. Roscoe, as only signs of "the ruling passion strong in death," they give unequivocal and lamentable proof, that pope Julius II. died as he had lived, a man of unsubdued arrogance, and of unrestrained malignant passions. How strongly should such an example impress upon the reader, the necessity of those influences of the Holy Spirit, without which a man cannot see the kingdom of heaven!

CHAPTER V.

LEO X.—HIS CHARACTER AND MANNER OF LIFE—
STATE OF SOCIETY.

A.D. 1513.

No contrast can be stronger than is presented between the character of the turbulent Julius

and that of his mild and almost slothful successor. The choice of the conclave fell, after seven days' deliberation and party-plotting, upon Giovanni de' Medici, second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. The Medici had known painful reverses since the death of Lorenzo. They had been expelled from Florence, and had lost most of their power and much of their wealth. It was only by observing the most politic course of behaviour that they were enabled to maintain among the jealous princes of Italy a position at all worthy of their hereditary greatness.

But no disposition could have been better adapted for such trying circumstances than that of Giovanni de' Medici ; and it was probably his conciliatory and polite, if not amiable demeanour, that now secured him the high dignity to which he had secretly aspired from his earliest youth.

The accession of De' Medici to the tiara as LEO X. afforded real joy to those who desired repose from the turmoils of war, and who sighed for the uninterrupted cultivation of letters and the arts. Better aspirations than these could hardly be said to exist at that period in Italy. There were few who desired the amendment of morals, or the restoration of pure religion ; perhaps there were none who knew by what means alone such changes could be produced. The Bible was either a sealed or a neglected book.

It was, however, in peaceful and enlightened

pursuits that the new pontiff had passed his life ; and it was expected, not unjustly, that he would distinguish his reign by the most generous patronage of all learned and ingenious men. Amongst the inscriptions that adorned the triumphal arches and the palaces of Rome on the day of Leo's coronation, was one that expressed this feeling in pithy and striking phrase. Alluding to the debaucheries of Alexander VI., and the warlike habits of Julius II., it contrasted with these the mild and studious disposition of the new pontiff, in the following lines :—

“Once Venus ruled ; next Mars usurped the throne ;
Now Pallas calls these favoured seats her own.”

Leo, however, did not combine with his love for literature and art, any desires for the establishment of purity in the Roman church ; even had he done so, however, that vast organization of fraud and wickedness had now gone to moral decay, beyond the reach of any restorative influence that a pope could employ, however excellent he might himself have been. It was not, as we shall see, to be regenerated at all ; and whatever amendment in morals it was destined to receive, the first impulse required to be given wholly from beyond its own borders.

The life of Leo X. was one of intellectual sensuality, which, though widely removed from the debasing habits of his immediate predecessors, was not a whit more favourable to the prevalence of “pure and undefiled religion.” Reared by his father amidst relics of ancient

art, saved from the general wreck of Greece and imperial Rome, he had been accustomed to revere the wisdom and genius of heathen sages far more profoundly than the deepest inspirations of the apostles and of the Son of God. At the time when he assumed the pontificate, the tendency of the age, of which he was the true offspring, had reached its culminating point. The homage for antiquity had attained its greatest height, and was producing its proper fruits in inciting men to emulate, in writings composed in their own mother-tongue, the ancient models of philosophy and wit. Artists and sculptors also were weary of merely *copying* the ancients, and hence we find a Raphael and an Angelo embodying religious conceptions, drawn from the faith or the superstitions of their time, in forms as purely beautiful and sublime as any that emanated from the schools of Greece.

Leo was the patron both of those who delighted in imitating the ancients, and of those who strove after originality in their labours. His education and taste perhaps inclined him most to the former, and he rewarded with the highest favour those who excelled in Latin composition. He could himself write and speak that language with Ciceronian elegance, and an improvisatore of Latin hexameters needed no other recommendation to his esteem than his possession of that art. But Leo also encouraged the attempts of Bembo and others to give correctness and dignity to the native Italian,

and every effort at original writing in that tongue was rewarded with his cordial approval. "Ariosto," we are told, "was among the acquaintances of his youth. Machiavelli composed more than one of his works expressly for him. His halls, galleries, and chapels, were filled by Raphael with the rich ideals of human beauty, and with the purest expression of life in its most varied forms. He was a passionate lover of music—a more scientific practice of which was just then becoming diffused throughout Italy; the sounds of music were daily heard floating through the palace, Leo himself humming the airs that were performed." *

With these intellectual enjoyments Leo blended others of a yet lighter kind; for his life was one of worldly pleasure, and he paid little heed to the most pressing exigencies of either church or state. The autumn he would pass in the country, hawking at Viterbo, hunting the stag at Corneto, or fishing in the lake of Bolsena. His favourite rural residence was Malliano, where he would surround himself with improvisatori, and other men of light and agreeable talents, (down to the jester and buffoon,) who aided in making the hours—those precious deposits—pass, as he thought, pleasantly away.

In the winter, Leo mostly kept his court in Rome, where men of learning and genius were always welcome, and where a round of gay and costly festivities relieved the fatigue which his

* Ranke's "Popes of the Sixteenth Century." (I. ii. 3.)

occasional attention to public concerns might create. "No expenditure was found too lavish when the question was one of amusements, theatres, presents, or marks of favour. There was high jubilee when it was known that Giuliano de' Medici meant to settle with his young wife in Rome. 'Here,' writes cardinal Bibbiena to him, 'we lack nothing but a court with ladies!'"*

Amidst all this merry-making it would have been hard indeed for thoughts of reforming the church to have entered the pontiff's mind. In truth, the church was not in a state very different from that which a man like Leo would have naturally preferred to any other. Had it been an easy task—had there been no vexation and trouble involved in bringing about the change, he might perhaps have endeavoured to repress open immorality in the priesthood, and would have insisted that a teacher of others should be possessed of some learning himself. The open vices of the clergy might have received some rebuke, and the shameful ignorance that generally prevailed might have been partially removed. Although he might not have cared more than his predecessors, whether doctors in theology had ever read a single page of the Bible, he would at least have thought it decent that the priests should be *able* to read the mass with tolerable correctness. But even to effect such seemly alterations as these, Leo x. was destitute of the requisite energy. They

* Ranke's "Popes of the Sixteenth Century." (I. ii. 3.)

would doubtless have met with his approbation, but to originate them was more than he had courage to attempt. No wish, however, for the establishment of spiritual religion and vital godliness could ever have entered his mind, for in these he was quite wanting himself. Indeed, it is only too probable that, like most of the literati of his age, he was no believer at all in the solemn verities of holy writ. It is affirmed of him that he once exclaimed, "This Christianity! how profitable a farce it has proved to us!"

It is certain that Leo was surrounded by men who held every conceivable shade of infidel and sceptical opinions, from the avowed and unblushing atheist to the secret doubter. The most awful declarations of Scripture furnished matter for the jesting and mockery of the gay courtiers who attended the pope. Even the priests were wont to boast to each other, in their revelries, how they deluded the people, by only pretending to transubstantiate the bread and wine in the mass, saying, instead of the usual formula, "*Panis es et panis manebis*," "*Vinum es et vinum manebis*,"—"Bread thou art and bread thou shalt remain;" "Wine thou art and wine thou shalt abide." One who was not at all likely to be a severe censor of vice, but who was endowed with keen foresight of social changes, the renowned Machiavelli, observed, that "the greatest symptoms of the approaching ruin of Christianity," (by which he meant Roman Catholicism,) "is that the nearer the nations are to the capital of

LEO X.

Christendom, the less do we find in them of a real Christian spirit. The crimes and scandalous example of the court of Rome are the cause of Italy having lost all principles of piety and all religious feelings. Indeed, we Italians have chiefly to thank the church and the priests for having become a nation of impious persons and cut-throats.* The depravity of the Romish church had, indeed, reached its highest climax; but the same Divine Providence which, in a former age, had raised up an Arnold, a Wycliffe, a Jerome, and a Huss, had now prepared a remedy for the gigantic evils with which the papal system had oppressed the world.

CHAPTER VI.

WARS OF LEO X. WITH FRANCE AND URBINO—CONSPIRACY
OF CARDINALS.
A.D. 1513—1517.

DESPERATE as was the moral state of the church, and loud as was the call for a thorough reform—a call to which utterance had been given with more or less distinctness ever since the Council of Constance, it was not to ecclesiastical matters that Leo x. first gave his attention. He had hardly ascended the throne when Italy was thrown into alarm at the news of another French invasion by the armies of king Louis XII. Ever since the expedition of Charles VIII. the French had laid claim to the duchy of

* Machiavelli: "Dissertation on 1st Decade of Livy."

Milan, and the vigorous efforts of Julius II. to preserve Italy from foreign encroachments have already passed before us in review. The death of that redoubtable pontiff seems to have encouraged the French monarch to renew the attempt to wrest the Milanese territory from Maximilian Sforza, who now held the sceptre of that duchy. Sforza turned an imploring eye to the pope, who, although no military genius, saw clearly enough the demands of the crisis.

Leo first of all attempted to draw the emperor and the king of England into a league of defence for Italy ; but finding that succours arrived but tardily from these remote quarters, he engaged at his own expense a numerous body of Swiss mercenaries, which he added to all the force that could possibly be raised within the Italian borders. In the battle of Novara, which was fought June 6, 1513, the question of French occupancy was decided for the present ; for, after a dreadful conflict, the Swiss and Italians came off wholly victorious, and Louis XII. was glad to purchase peace on the most humiliating terms.

The death of Louis XII., in 1515, completely changed, however, the aspect of affairs. Francis I., his successor, was ardent and aspiring. He burned above all to achieve for himself the reputation of a warrior, and therefore lost no time in asserting his right to the duchy of Milan. But Francis was not devoid of prudence, and he accordingly commenced opera-

tions by labouring to effect a union between himself and those other monarchs who were likely to obstruct his designs. He succeeded in contracting an alliance with Henry VIII. of England—with the archduke, soon to be the emperor Charles V.—and with the Venetian senate. So formidable a league against the quiet of central Italy made the pontiff tremble ; and his cautious temper induced him to refrain alike from opposing so strong a confederacy, and from giving countenance to their plans, until he should be more certain of the probable results. He resolved, therefore, for the present to leave Milan to its fate.

After some temporizing, however, Leo found it to be quite necessary that he should take a decided part in the approaching contest. Siding, therefore, with those who aimed at keeping the too powerful French out of Italy, he united his arms with those of the Swiss, the emperor Maximilian, and Ferdinand of Arragon.

The details of this struggle may be rapidly told. Francis made his appearance in Italy at the head of a powerful army, comprising the flower of French chivalry, expecting to be joined there by his Venetian allies. But his progress was disputed at every step by the brave Swiss, who were eager to repeat the achievements of Novara. At Marignano, the allied armies met the intruders in full force. In a hard-fought battle, the French proved themselves more than a match for the combined strength of the Italians, Spaniards, and Swiss.

It was towards evening when these last commenced the attack with their wonted impetuosity, and, breaking the French lines, would, perhaps, have carried all before them had not the darkness of night interrupted the combat. All that night both armies continued under arms, waiting impatiently for the dawn that the work of carnage might begin afresh. When day broke, it was seen that Francis had reorganized his forces. He led the vanguard in person, and inspired his soldiers with such enthusiasm that they fought with great courage, and in the end gained a decisive victory.

Francis was now undisputed master of Milan, and the politic Leo hastened forthwith to conciliate a foe, who, if further exasperated, might inflict injury even on the sacred domains of the church. But the French king was content with his present conquests, and, receiving the pope's ambassadors with the greatest cordiality, proposed a personal interview between himself and Leo for the purpose of strengthening the ties of their friendship. The meeting was arranged to be held at Bologna, and thither both the potentates proceeded, attended by a large concourse of followers of all kinds. At Bologna, Francis performed homage to the pope, according to custom, by kissing Leo's hand and foot ; and the pontiff insisted, on his part, that the king should keep his head covered, although contrary to the usual etiquette. This visit of Francis to Leo lasted for some weeks, and the time was not wholly

exhausted in tournaments and other festivities ; many really important transactions, which deeply affected the welfare of both France and Italy, took place between the two princes.

Among these was the abolition of the *Pragmatic Sanction*, an ancient covenant between the popes and the monarchs of France, through which the French churches had enjoyed a singular independence of papal control. It was now agreed that all the powers of the pope should be transferred to the king, who should henceforth present to all vacant sees, and adjudicate in all ecclesiastical affairs, with a merely nominal subjection to the supremacy of the pope. The French clergy remonstrated in vain against this arrangement, by which they gained a master who had full power to compel obedience, in exchange for one whose will might very often be safely set at nought. The independence of the French church was thus destroyed, and although the growing insolence of prelates had rendered the step quite essential to the repose of France, it will be hard to exculpate the pope and the king, (with whom it was a mere question of policy, and who acted throughout the business in direct opposition to all their professed convictions of papal supremacy,) from the charge so vehemently urged against them, of buying and selling the spiritual interests of the people.

It was also at this Bologna conference that Franeis, solicitous to please the English king, obtained for his ambitious servant, Wolsey, a

cardinal's hat as compensation for the loss of a bishopric in France which Francis desired for a friend of his own.

Relieved from the terrors of foreign invasion, Leo had leisure to undertake some long-cherished designs for the aggrandizement of his own family. For such selfish aims the popes had now become notorious, and the ambitious Medici were not likely to let slip an opportunity so favourable as the present, when one of their house swayed the potent sceptre of the church.

Leo's affections were chiefly directed to his nephew Lorenzo, and he now resolved to obtain for that nephew a lasting position among the sovereigns of Italy. In a state of society so depraved as that of the Italians in the sixteenth century, it was no difficult matter for a pope to charge any of his neighbours with some crimes of a very serious nature. The duchy of Urbino seemed to Leo the most desirable possession for his relative, and he therefore immediately proceeded to accuse its duke of having formerly, with his own hands, assassinated a cardinal in the streets of Ravenna. For this crime, which indeed was not denied, the duke was now summoned to answer before the papal tribunal. An instant refusal to obey the citation furnished a plausible pretext for the employment of force, and a civil war ensued, which, if it did not deluge Italy with blood, like the wars of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., kept the central states embroiled for a long time in continual discord.

The pope appears to especial disadvantage in the whole of this affair. As cupidity prompted and injustice commenced it, so did cruelty and treachery signalize its prosecution and its close. The duchess of Urbino obtained audience of Leo, and forcibly urged how great would be the scandal, how monstrous the ingratitude, if Lorenzo, whom, when an infant, she had caressed in her arms, should now rise up against his benefactors, and repay their kindness with persecution and robbery. But her entreaties and tears were all in vain: ambition had effectually steeled the heart of the pope against the claims of justice, and even the voice of pity. The spoliation was decided on; and so far did Leo carry his harshness, that when, after Urbino had been seized and its duke sent into exile, the latter humbly petitioned to be at least set free from ecclesiastical censures, the pope sternly refused to grant even this cheap favour, which the poor duke sincerely believed to be necessary for the salvation of his soul.

But cruelty goes not unpunished. It often meets a recompense even in the present life; and although this action of Leo's was quite at variance with the usual tenor of his life, yet it was destined to receive retribution. In the course of the contest with Urbino, many wholly unoffending families were, of course, involved in the ruin so indiscriminately dealt out by the violent hands of war. Amongst these was the family of the Petrucci, which had been deprived by the pope of their govern-

ment of Sienna, and expelled altogether from that city. But one of the Petrucci was in the sacred college, and cardinal Petrucci now meditated a deadly revenge against the destroyer of his house. At first, he declared he would not hesitate to assassinate the pontiff wherever he might chance to meet him, but as soon as the paroxysm of his anger had subsided he took other measures, and secretly formed a conspiracy for taking away his life by poison. Still the fierce passions that raged within him could ill brook the delay necessary to accomplish his object, and he often gave utterance to his wrath in a manner so public that he was at last obliged to escape from Rome, to avoid the consequences of his imprudence. To Leo's dismay it was now found that the conspiracy had been joined in by a considerable number of the cardinals, and he instantly caused such as he suspected to be apprehended and committed to prison. Petrucci himself was inveigled to Rome by the sacred promise of a safe-conduct, a promise only made to be shamefully broken. After bitterly reproaching the guilty cardinals for their treachery, Leo sentenced Petrucci and some inferior confederates to be strangled in prison, and the other chief conspirators were heavily fined.

The peace of the pontiff's life could not, however, be restored by judicial punishments. Treason might still, for aught he knew, be working in secret, and Leo was now condemned to experience the miserable torment of always

fearing an unknown and invisible foe. To relieve himself of these miseries he resolved on largely augmenting the number of cardinals, hoping thus to be assured that the majority of the college would be his grateful and faithful adherents. At one time, he promoted thirty-one persons to this much-coveted honour, some of whom were his own relatives, others his personal friends, and the remainder individuals of eminence in connexion with the courts of France, Germany, Portugal, and Spain. By this politic step he greatly advanced his influence abroad, and secured more firmly the bonds of peace and safety at home.

CHAPTER VII.

FONTIFICATE OF LEO X.—OUTBREAK OF THE REFORMATION—THE OPPOSITION OF ROME.

A.D. 1517—1520.

It is somewhat remarkable that Leo x., who longed for nothing so much as the quiet enjoyment of life, should have been allowed less repose than most of his predecessors. No sooner had he hushed the storms of political and domestic strife than fearful indications appeared of a far more fierce and protracted ecclesiastical war. The REFORMATION now began to gather its forces, and already sounded from behind the Alps the loud clarion of battle.

For ages it had been the common practice of the popes to replenish their treasury, when

ever it was deeply drained, by means of *indulgences*. For the promulgation of these, the slightest occasion or excuse was eagerly seized. Thus, when Julius II. determined on erecting the new cathedral of St. Peter's, it furnished an excellent pretext for the sale of indulgences. And as the completion of this edifice was a slow and tedious work, extending over a space of many years, the same source of revenue continued open long after Julius was laid in the tomb. The lavish expenditure of Leo X. made such resources peculiarly needful and acceptable to him, and we have evidence, if we may so term it, of one of the *best* purposes to which these funds were devoted, in a curious document yet extant,—a letter from Leo to his commissioner of indulgences, requiring a hundred and forty ducats to effect the purchase of a manuscript of the thirty-third book of Livy.

The sale of indulgences had thus become an authorized and regular branch of clerical duties. It was a traffic chiefly monopolized, however, by the Begging Friars, an order which, originally pretending to superior sanctity, had now grown to be the most dissolute and venal of all, and the members of which were even the moral pestilence of the unhappy neighbourhood they chose to infest. Wandering from town to town, they everywhere offered their indulgences for sale in the most public places, and with unblushing effrontery exaggerated the sufficiently impudent claims of the impious indulgence itself. There was no sin, they affirmed, however

awful it might be, for which the indulgence would not secure an ample pardon. Nay! men might thus purchase a complete absolution from all crimes whatever that they might yet intend to commit. All would be pardoned, and that without the disagreeable necessity of repentance. Relatives who were groaning in purgatory might thus be set free, and "the very moment," said one of the indulgence-sellers, "that the purchase-money chinks at the bottom of the strong box, these souls escape from their torments, and soar to heaven." For the paltry sum of twelve groats, they were reminded, a man could deliver his father out of purgatory; and for eight ducats he might *commit murder* without fear of eternal retribution.*

But the labours of Dante and Petrarch, of Reuchlin and Erasmus, had not been so utterly lost as to leave the world quite in the same darkness as of old respecting these blasphemous pretensions. The seller of indulgences now often encountered the laughter of an unbelieving audience, and sometimes received a severer and not undeserved chastisement. Especially in Germany had the bonds of superstition been loosened by that spirit of free inquiry into every sort of doctrine to which the revival of letters had given birth. In Germany, also, it was not felt, so strongly as in Italy, that it was for the interest of the priesthood to uphold absurd

* See further details of this monstrous traffic in Merle D'Aubigné's "History of the Reformation," book iii., who cites Luther's Theses, Tetzel's Anti-Theses, and Müller's Reliq. iii. p. 264.

dogmas which in their hearts men had wholly ceased to believe. There was a spirit rising in Germany that could not endure the loathsome mixture of arrogance, hypocrisy, and blasphemy of which an indulgence-seller was composed, and this spirit pervaded the universities and monasteries, as well as the cities and towns.

Already had LUTHER, preacher in the town church of Wittemberg, and professor of theology in its university, awakened great attention to the paramount authority of the Scriptures, and especially to the Scriptural, but then novel and ill-understood doctrine of the sinner's justification by faith alone in the atonement of Christ. Already he had gathered around him a promising phalanx of ardent young men, who looked up to him with reverence as a revealer of new truth, and in whose hearts was kindled a holy zeal akin to his own.

But at present Luther still retained the profoundest respect for the pope, and for all the ancient institutions of the Roman church. He groaned over the flagrant abuses of the times, but persuaded himself that these abuses were not tolerated by the pope, and needed only to be exposed to be removed. To this very task he was now addressing himself with all the stupendous energy of his soul; and when, in 1516, he heard that Tetzl, one of the most notorious and impudent of the indulgence-mongers, had ventured to approach Wittemberg, hawking his blasphemous certificates for the salvation of souls, and proclaiming their

virtues in the most extravagant and shocking terms, Luther burned with indignation, and he passionately exclaimed, "If God permit, I will knock a hole in his drum!"

How this threat was fulfilled, and what dissensions were created in Germany by the bold stand which the reformer made for a purer creed and worship, it is beside our present purpose minutely to record. We have here chiefly to do with the ultimate results of his labours, and their direct effects on Italy and the papedom. Nevertheless, the noble reformer himself must occasionally pass across the scene.

Luther's boldest stroke was his affixing to the doors of Wittemberg church the famous ninety-five theses or propositions, in which he distinctly impugned the authority of the indulgences. These theses were copied and spread abroad with wonderful rapidity. "It was as if angels had carried them," said his disciples afterwards. In a fortnight, they were talked of throughout Germany, and in a month, had reached the confines of Christendom, both east and west. The emperor Maximilian saw that the bold innovator might one day assist him against the pope, as Savanorola had formerly aided Charles VIII., and he exclaimed, "Take care of that monk, Luther; the time may come when we shall have need of him!" And even the pontiff was not displeased with the theses. He estimated them by their literary merit, and regarding them as proofs of an original and independent mind, "This friar Martin," said

he, "is a very fine genius, and all that is said against him is mere monkish jealousy."

But if the pope was indifferent to the "German squabble," (for so Leo had styled it,) the cardinals and priests thought it worthy of more serious notice. The censor of the papal court, Prierias, undertook to reply to the theses, which he did in a treatise abounding with adulation of the pope, and violent abuse and threatenings for the "barbarous" and daring monk. He contemptuously asks, "Has this Luther an iron nose or a brazen head, so that it cannot be broken?" He insinuates, that if Luther should "receive a good bishopric, he would be ready to preach up the indulgences which he now chose to blacken." And he intimates that the pope "can employ the secular arm to constrain those who depart from the faith." Such was the spirit with which the rising Reformation was met in the metropolis of Christendom.

Rome soon began to bestir herself with considerable energy. Early in 1518, the cardinal Rovere addressed a letter to Luther's sovereign and protector, the elector Frederic, cautioning him that his friendship for the reformer was suggesting suspicions at Rome of his being himself heretically disposed. A little later, the emperor Maximilian, wishing to ingratiate himself with the pope, wrote to Leo, offering his services to carry into effect whatever measures might be resolved on for checking the growth of the heresy.

Leo was now roused to action, and he forthwith issued a summons citing Luther to appear personally in Rome within the space of sixty days. A letter was also despatched to the elector Frederic, warning him against Luther's heresy, and seeking to detach him altogether from the reformer's cause. The order for Luther's appearance in Rome was soon afterwards changed for another to proceed to Augsburg, to meet the cardinal Gaeta, the pope's legate at the imperial court, and be by him examined respecting the doctrines he held. Here, for the present, the court of Rome seemed disposed to rest in its opposition to the German Reformation.

Other matters engrossed the pontiff's attention. On the one hand, the Ottoman Turks were making new inroads on western Europe, and the Italians began to apprehend an attack on their own peninsula. To avert so tremendous an evil, Leo strove to unite the European powers in a confederacy to resist the infidel foe, and hoped, by exciting anew the crusading spirit, to restore that deference for the papacy which was too evidently on the decline.

On the other hand, important political changes were taking place beyond the Alps, which might seriously affect the welfare of Italy. The feeble old emperor Maximilian died in 1518, and a struggle ensued between Francis I. and the archduke Charles for the imperial crown, in which the latter was the victor. Charles had now become the greatest potentate of Europe,

and indeed the most powerful that Europe had seen since the days of Charlemagne. The crowns of the Empire, of Spain, the Sicilies, and the Netherlands, all reposed on his head, so that to his movements the eyes of all sovereigns were of course anxiously turned.

But the excitement of these events having passed away, the pope again directed his attention to the dissensions of the German church. Still hoping to conciliate Luther, he despatched a Saxon nobleman, of courteous manners and consummate address, Charles Miltitz, to endeavour to prevail on the reformer to publish a retraction of his heretical doctrines. But Luther had gone too far to retract, and had gained a much larger number of disciples than people at Rome imagined. Miltitz was astonished to observe, as he proceeded to Wittemberg, innumerable tokens of the strong hold which the doctrines of the reformer had already taken on the minds of the lower classes. "Truly," said he to Luther, "I would not undertake to carry you out of Germany, if I had at my command an army of twenty-five thousand men!" Nor was this mere flattery; it was sober sense. The youth of Germany, attracted by Luther's fame, and by sympathy with the truths he taught, were flocking to the university of Wittemberg by hundreds. "Our city," wrote Luther, "can hardly receive all who arrive here." And it was not to Wittemberg, nor even to Germany, that this movement was confined. The age was ripe for revolt against

effete superstitions, and from Switzerland, from Bohemia, and even from Italy, Luther received letters, vehemently urging him to proceed boldly in the course he had commenced.

And Luther himself was less disposed than ever to retract. The fierce opposition he had met with from German doctors and priests, had led him to a deeper study of the history of the Roman church. New light broke daily on his mind, revealing the utter dissimilarity between the papal imposture and primitive Christianity. Until now he had revered the authority of the pope, but we find him at this period writing to a friend, "I am studying the decretals of the pontiffs, and (let me whisper in your ear) I am not sure whether the pope be Antichrist himself, or only his apostle, to such a degree has Christ been perverted and sacrificed." At a disputation which he held shortly afterwards at Leipsic, he openly impugned the primacy of the pope; and in a very few months he had become satisfied that the mass was not the Lord's supper, and that celibacy was not binding on the clergy.

The blandishments of Miltitz were consequently employed to no purpose; and Rome began to meditate severer measures for the extermination of the dangerous heresy. The pontiff himself was, in all probability, averse to the adoption of these ulterior steps. It was also very doubtful how far the new emperor could be depended on for carrying into effect the decrees of the church. But the dictates of prudence were overruled by the clamours of

bigotry ; for Luther's rival and enemy, Dr. Eck, had industriously poisoned the minds of all the cardinals, and on the 15th of June, 1520, the famous bull was sent forth by which the doctrines of the reformer were officially condemned, and his person handed over to the vengeance of the secular power.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROGRESS OF REFORMATION—LUTHER IMPRISONED—
DEATH OF LEO X.
A.D. 1520, 1521.

THE reception of the papal bull in Germany was not calculated to inspire re-assurance at the court of Rome. At Leipsic, its publication was forbidden by authority of the duke. At Erfurt, the students tore in pieces the copies that were sent, and threw the fragments into the river, exclaiming, "It is a bull ; let it swim !" At Wittemberg, a public meeting was called by Luther, and a large bonfire being lighted, the reformer cast into it, in the presence of an assembly of doctors, professors, students, and citizens, the volumes of the canon law, the decretals, and other papal statutes ; and then holding aloft the pope's bull, and solemnly pronouncing these words, "Whereas thou hast grieved the Lord's holy ones, may the everlasting fire grieve and consume thee," he committed that also to the flames, amidst shouts of approbation from the concourse of spectators.

So bold a defiance of Rome's most terrible fulminations at once stimulated the zeal of Luther's partisans, and infuriated the malice of his foes. The legates of the pope now applied to the young emperor, and implored him to put in prompt execution the decrees of the bull. But Charles v. was too cautious to commit himself to any course that might possibly, at the very beginning of his reign, embroil him with several states of his empire. He said he would consult the elector Frederic, the oldest and wisest of the German princes, and be guided by his counsel. The advice of the elector, who had always been partial to the reformer, and whose convictions were now inclined more than ever to the side of Scriptural truth, was, that before Luther was delivered over to the vengeance of Rome, he should be allowed to plead his own cause before impartial judges. In accordance with this counsel, Charles summoned the reformer to present himself before the diet of the empire, just then about to be held in the city of Worms.

All circumstances seemed to combine to attract an unusual concourse of princes, prelates, and nobles, to this memorable diet. The accession of a new and powerful monarch to the imperial throne; the well-known jealousies between Charles, Francis I., and the pope; and the religious excitement rising higher and higher in all countries, united to swell the numbers of this august assembly. It is beside our present purpose to relate its proceedings in

detail ; they may be found in all biographies of Luther, and histories of the Reformation. Luther, in spite of repeated friendly warnings and entreaties to the contrary, did not fail to appear, and was met before the diet by his implacable enemy and eloquent accuser, the legate Aleander.

The excitement was intense when Luther entered the assembly to make his defence. The hall was crowded to excess, and the reformer was well-nigh exhausted by the heat before he was suffered to begin. Then, first in German, and afterwards in Latin, he explained the steps he had taken, the motives which had guided him, and the reasons why he could not possibly retract. Being then desired to give a clear and precise answer to the question, whether he would or would not retract, he firmly and deliberately replied, "Unless fully convinced by the testimony of Scripture, I neither can nor will retract anything. Here I stand," he continued, as if reflecting on his solitary, forlorn, and helpless position, "I can do no otherwise. God help me. Amen."

One would have expected that so manly an assertion of the rights of conscience would have commanded the admiration of the entire assembly ; and on many it did not fail to make a very deep impression. But the emperor's education had lamentably unfitted him for rightly appreciating Luther's noble protest against debasing superstitions and priestly imposture. Charles was a blind follower of the

popes, and he therefore finally decreed that the reformer should instantly depart from Worms, and not be found within the bounds of the empire after the lapse of twenty days.

Luther departed, confidently intrusting himself and his cause to the gracious protection of that God who had so manifestly "set him for the defence of the gospel." And God quickly appeared in his behalf. The life of His servant was eagerly sought by misguided and evil-minded men; but there was more work for him yet to accomplish, and so his life was preserved. As Luther leisurely journeyed to Wittenberg, passing through the wood of Altenstein, he was suddenly surprised by a band of armed men in masks, who placed him on a horse brought for that purpose, and riding rapidly through by-paths in the woods, conducted him to a castle called the Wartburg, surrounded on all sides by the dense Thuringian forests; a place of refuge which the reformer, in after days, was wont to denominate his "Patmos."

This rescue had been barely effected in time to save the life of Luther; for on his quitting Worms, the papal legate had influence enough to procure a decree from the emperor, by which the reformer's writings were sentenced to be burned, his adherents to be seized and imprisoned, and Luther himself to be brought in sure custody to the imperial presence, from whence it was intended, no doubt, he should only depart to grace an *auto-da-fé*.

Delivered for the present from the great disturber of ecclesiastical lethargy and corruption, Leo x. had leisure to indulge more thoroughly in those pursuits of literature, taste, and ambition, that were the most grateful aliment of his mind. It may be recorded in his praise, that he gathered around him, and liberally rewarded, such men of genius and learning as Italy then contained ; but few of these have left names that claim our highest veneration. The whole character of that age bears the stamp of the German, rather than the Italian intellect. It was the energy of a Luther, the consecrated lore of a Melancthon, the polished wit of an Erasmus, which then gave impulse and direction to the thoughts and opinions of the world, much more than the frivolous jesting or refined pedantry of the infidel ecclesiastics who thronged the halls of the Vatican. Yet the zeal of the pontiff in collecting ancient manuscripts, which he purchased at almost any price, to enrich the Laurentian library ; his efforts also to increase the stores of the Vatican library ; and his discriminating taste in the patronage of artists and sculptors, amongst the crowds of whom the towering forms of a Raphael and an Angelo are conspicuous, constitute a fair claim in behalf of Leo x. to the gratitude of mankind ; and although they can form no justification, may be accepted as some sort of compensation for his encouragement of ribald poets and buffoons.

Amongst other suitors for literary honours at the hands of pope Leo x., was one of singular

character and pretensions. The writings of Luther had called forth a host of replies, and none of these excited so much curiosity, or won such general applause, as that of king Henry VIII. of England. This ambitious young monarch, in his eagerness for all sorts of distinction, and influenced by the vanity which the flattery of his courtiers had inspired, had determined on entering the lists of theological debate with the now world-famed monk of Wittemberg. The "Defence of the Seven Sacraments" which he produced is more remarkable for zeal than for learning or talent, but by the popish party it was extolled for the latter as much as for the former. It was presented to the pope with great ceremony, and was received by him in full consistory. The reward which Henry coveted was also granted after some demur, and a papal bull authorized the English king to style himself henceforth the "Defender of the Faith." Thus the king of England, to his great satisfaction, was at last placed on a perfect equality with the "Most Christian" monarch of France, and the "Catholic" sovereign of Spain.

Whilst Leo was thus diligently establishing his title to be regarded as the patron of letters and the arts, he was not inattentive to political affairs. The occupation of Milan by the French had always been a cause of sore vexation to his mind, and whatever apparent amity existed between him and Francis I., was only a politic cover to secret dislike. He seized the first opportunity of breaking the compact between

them. Uniting the forces of "the church" with those of the emperor, he entered on regular hostilities towards the close of 1521, in the hope of expelling the French altogether from the Italian soil, and once more obtaining the states of Parma and Piacenza, of which his treaty with Francis had deprived him.

It had long been the practice of the princes of Italy, in their frequent wars with each other, to engage the services of the Swiss mountaineers, whose valour was strangely combined with a mercenary spirit, which led them to sell their life-blood to the best paymaster, whoever he might be. On this occasion, the pontiff was the highest bidder; and upon the French retiring into the city of Milan, the allies, strengthened by the Swiss auxiliaries, made a vigorous and successful assault, compelling the French to surrender at discretion, and to promise the immediate withdrawal of their whole force from Italy.

Leo was at his country-seat of Malliano when the news of this victory reached him. Exultation at so signal a triumph threw him into the greatest excitement. The enemies of Italy were vanquished; Parma and Piacenza again sparkled among the brightest gems in the papal diadem. During the whole night, he paced to and fro in his chamber, alternately gazing on the festivities which were commenced by his retainers in honour of the event, and which he could see from his window, and reflecting on the glorious career that now seemed open to his ambition.

On the morrow, Leo returned to Rome, to give directions for the public celebration of the triumph ; but on that very day he was seized with a fatal illness, and amidst excruciating sufferings of body, and still more distressing mental agitation—without hope to cheer him, and without faith in the atoning blood of Christ to sustain him—he expired in the course of a few hours. He was only forty-seven years of age, and had reigned but eight years.

CHAPTER IX.

PONTIFICATE OF ADRIAN VI.

A.D. 1521—1523.

THE choice of a successor to the deceased pope was a momentous affair ; and had the cardinals been chiefly concerned for the welfare of the church, they would (as Merle D'Aubigné justly remarks) have chosen for such troubled times a Gregory VII. or an Innocent III. But the members of the conclave were, as usual, too busy in pursuing their own separate interests to think of the public good ; and thus the providence of God employed them to forward, unconsciously, the great work of the Reformation. Unable for several days to agree, it at last happened that a sufficient number of votes fell upon a man whom none of them really desired to elect, Adrian of Utrecht, formerly a professor at Louvain, and then tutor to Charles V. Contrary to their hopes, Adrian

accepted the tiara, and, contrary to usage, assumed the popedom without changing his name.

ADRIAN VI. was a perfect contrast in character to Leo x. His gravity was so great that it is said he never laughed, a faint smile being his nearest approach to mirth. His habits were severely studious, abstemious, and correct; there can be no question that he was heartily zealous for the welfare of the Roman church. The Dutch were in raptures that one of their countrymen should be chosen to fill the chair of St. Peter, and the Romans were willing to suppress their mortification at the rigid manners of the new pontiff, in consideration of the five thousand benefices which he had it in his power to bestow.

Adrian was determined to set an example in his own person of the deportment which he thought befitting the priestly office. On approaching Rome, he alighted from his carriage, and entered the city with bare legs and feet, intending to impress on the citizens, and especially on the clergy, the duties of humility and self-denial. That he was only laughed at for his pains by the volatile Romans we may be quite sure, and that such a *show* of humility bordered very nearly upon affectation, if not on hypocrisy itself, even charity is obliged to suspect. On taking possession of the Vatican, Adrian determined to continue his former domestic habits. His old housekeeper still provided his frugal and solitary meals in the halls which had so lately been crowded with guests

and servants, and where luxurious banquets had been daily prepared at an enormous cost.

In all matters of refinement and taste, the new pope was equally a contrast to the old. On being shown that noble group of statuary, the Laocoon, which Julius II. had purchased at a great price from those who had recovered it from amidst ruins, Adrian coldly remarked, "These are the idols of the pagans!" The frescoes of Raphael he denounced in the same ascetic or barbarous spirit as "merely useless ornaments." As for poets, he would not have them so much as named in his presence. It is true that the poets of Leo X.'s court were not worthy of much esteem, but Adrian would have treated an Ariosto and an Arretino with an equal amount of contempt.

Great changes had occurred in Germany since the imprisonment of Luther in the Wartburg. The seed which he had sown had had time to grow, and was now bringing forth its earliest fruits. The reformer had hitherto abstained from urging any alterations in the forms of worship, or in the public discipline of the church. But it was soon perceived by his disciples that the great truths which their master taught were wholly incompatible with the customs and forms authorized by the church. The celibacy of the clergy, so productive of immorality, was the first of these customs to be attacked. Some of the reforming priests dared to break their vows, and entered

into matrimonial bonds. The monasteries were the next object of assault. It was declared that monastic vows were contrary to the spirit of Scripture and injurious to society. Thirteen Augustinian monks at Wittemberg at once forsook their monastery and abandoned the dress of their order. One of them even ventured to marry, and petitioned to be admitted as a burgess. Soon afterwards, the mass was publicly denounced from the pulpit by Carlstadt, and at his instigation the university and council of Wittemberg decreed that the Lord's supper, administered in a Scriptural manner, should be substituted for that absurd and superstitious rite.

All Germany was now on fire with a spirit of inquiry. Theological discussions were held at the fireside, in the market-place, and in the halls of justice. The vices of the papacy became increasingly apparent, and Luther threw oil upon the flames by pouring forth treatise after treatise from his secure hiding-place in the Thuringian woods. In fact, the reformer began to be alarmed at his own success, and trembled lest the zeal of his disciples should outstrip their prudence. That there was danger of this was quite evident, and it caused him the most serious concern. Some had used violence in destroying images and in preventing the priests from saying mass in the churches. Others pretended to a direct inspiration from heaven, and were beginning to be carried away by that spirit of fanaticism

which seldom fails to appear in times of religious awakening.

Fearful lest his own labours should thus lose their reward, and the great work of reformation be hindered by these extravagances, Luther resolved on quitting his secluded and secure abode, and presenting himself once more on the open arena of conflict. Finding no obstacle opposed to his design, he forsook the Wartburg, and the pulpits of Wittenberg again resounded with the earnest appeals that had before roused the sleeping soul of the people. Their success was as striking as ever. Fanaticism was exorcised, and the Reformation, again directed in a safe and Scriptural channel, pursued its course with greater speed than before.

The consternation and wrath which these movements excited among the adherents of Rome can scarcely be described. It was one of Adrian's first measures to write to the elector Frederic, sternly rebuking him for harbouring and befriending such pestilent disturbers of the church as Luther and his associates. In this letter, the elector is charged with destroying the unity of the church, and introducing the demon of strife into the fold of Christ. "If Christian peace has fled from the church—if the shout of war resounds from east to west—if an universal battle be at hand—for all this it is thou, even thou, who art to blame!" Proceeding to accuse Luther of all monstrous crimes, and to vilify him with the coarsest epithets, the pontiff pronounces a sentence of utter condemnation,

but in a strain so rhetorical as to leave some doubt whether it is Luther or Frederic at whom the bolt is hurled. "Of what punishment, what martyrdom then, thinkest thou we shall judge you deserving? In the name of Almighty God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose representative I am upon earth, I declare that thou shalt be punished in this world, and be plunged into eternal fire in that which is to come! Repent, and be converted! The two swords are suspended above thy head—the sword of the empire and the sword of the popedom!"

This last menace of the pontiff was not wholly without meaning. The princes of that age were generally far too willing to lend themselves to deeds of persecution in the sacred name of religion; and, except where his political interests interfered, Charles v. did not rank behind the most ardent of them in slavish devotion to the church. The inferior rulers, electors, dukes, and counts, stimulated by the pope, and sanctioned by the emperor, were eager to slake their thirst in the blood of the heretic Lutherans.

No time was lost. The work of slaughter, confiscation, and imprisonment was forthwith begun, and the Netherlands branded themselves with ignominy by sending the first of this new band of martyrs to the stake. At Brussels, three youthful monks, who had renounced their vows, were seized, manacled, torn from their homes, and after a hasty trial publicly burned to death.

ADRIAN VI.

In December, 1522, the diet of the empire assembled at Nuremberg; and Adrian, full of zeal against the reformers, despatched a faithful legate to be his representative in the council. It was at Luther that the legate aimed his most powerful blows. "This gangrened member," said he to the nobles, "must be separated entirely from the main body. As your fathers executed Huss and Jerome, so do you go forth and gain a magnificent victory over this infernal dragon."

But although there were not wanting in the diet princes who fully sympathized with the legate, the majority shuddered at his address. They entered on the consideration of the manifest abuses of the papacy, which Luther had so thoroughly laid bare, and passed resolutions which strikingly discovered the decline of papal influence. No fewer than eighty grievances were specified, and the answer returned to the pope's message concluded with these words: "If these grievances be not redressed within a set time, we shall think of other means of escape from so many oppressions and sufferings."

The pope did not, however, expect to heal all the disorders of the church by merely extirpating the heretics. He was too moral a man himself not to feel disgust at the vices and profligacy which everywhere prevailed, and amongst no class so much as the clergy. Adrian, also, was too earnest in desiring the welfare of the church not to give expression to his disgust. In fact, the very legate who demanded the

exemplary punishment of all heresy, was also charged with the pontiff's confession that the accusations of Luther against the papacy were undoubtedly just. "We are well aware," he said, "that for many years past several abuses and abominations have found place even beside the holy chair. From the head the malady has passed down into the limbs; from the pope it has extended to the prelates; we are all gone astray, there is none that hath done rightly, no not one. We would fain reform this Roman court whence proceeds so many evils; the whole world desires this, and for this object we consented to ascend the throne of the pontiffs."

But if, on the one hand, Adrian met with disappointment in his efforts to check the spread of heresy, he was quite as unsuccessful on the other in accomplishing the reforms of his own devising. Where, indeed, was he to make a beginning with the least prospect of ever achieving a thorough reformation? So long had corruption been permitted to grow—so inextricably had its fibres now entwined themselves about the very roots of the church, that to eradicate the one was inevitably to destroy the other. On all sides, the pope met with the most resolute resistance. At the least step towards reform, he was assailed with volleys of reproaches, warnings, menaces, and prayers. And, too probably, Adrian himself was not quite sincere in his reforming projects. If he had been, he would surely have regarded Luther's exposure of abuses as at the worst the

rough treatment of a friendly hand. He would have thought it deserving of praise rather than censure. And so, evidently, Luther himself believed ; for on translating into German one of the pontifical mandates in which it was said, "the cure must proceed step by step," the reformer sarcastically added, "with an interval of *some ages* between each step."

Moreover, Adrian was personally unpopular amongst his Italian subjects. His abstemious habits and severe looks gave him no favour with a people accustomed to gaiety, luxury, and uncontrolled license of manners. Wholly unused to business, the secular affairs of the popedom did not prosper in his hands, so that whilst Adrian himself often murmured, "I would much rather serve God in my provostry of Louvain than be pope at Rome," the Romans grumbled at his parsimony and his taxes, and heartily wished his popedom at an end. The gratification of their wishes was not long deferred, for, in September, 1523, Adrian died ; and although there is no solid ground for supposing that he expired by a violent death, the citizens in the night-time crowned his physician's gate with garlands of flowers, and inscribed over the top, "TO THE LIBERATOR OF HIS COUNTRY !"

CHAPTER X.

PONTIFICATE OF CLEMENT VII. TO THE SACK OF ROME.
A.D. 1523—1527.

So numerous and determined were the intrigues of the different parties in the conclave, that two months had almost slipped away ere they could fix on a successor to the chair. At last, the influence of the cardinal Giulio de' Medici prevailed. Having secured the prize, he assumed the title of CLEMENT VII.

This pontiff was in many respects well suited for the post he had gained. He had long been familiar with political affairs, and the popedom was now at least as much a political as an ecclesiastical dignity. He was gifted with quick discernment in the most perplexing difficulties, and his assiduity in attending to business was admirable when compared with the remissness of his predecessors. To Adrian's respect for morals and religion he made little pretension, but his zeal for the prosperity of the priesthood, and of the whole hierarchical system which now usurped the name of *the church*, was quite as ardent; while his taste for literature and the arts was far more decided, and in accordance with the demands of the age. Yet, notwithstanding these propitious qualities in his character, Clement's was destined to be one of the most disastrous and unfortunate reigns the popedom had hitherto experienced.

The state of public affairs had, indeed, never been so complicated as at the time when Cle-

ment assumed the tiara. On all sides, problems presented themselves, for the solution of which no single mind could possibly be adequate. To secure the temporal power of the popedom amidst the conflicting strifes of the sovereigns who now disputed the soil of Italy, and to maintain the institutions of the church when German reformers and Turkish invaders, sanctioned by the voice of indignant humanity, were threatening their demolition — these, indeed, were herculean labours, even had they been demanded at long intervals; but to be required all at once and of the same man was enough to overwhelm the strongest mind, and baffle the most skilful genius.

It was the state of the church to which Clement first directed his attention. The reformation had now made considerable progress in nearly all the countries beyond the Alps; it was not without advocates even in Italy, for the revival of letters, the close attention that was paid to the editing and printing of rare and valuable manuscripts, and the intercourse which for these purposes was opened between the learned men of Italy and other countries, had created more liberal modes of thinking, and had directed the minds of many to the corrupted state of religion. Ecclesiastics, zealous enough in behalf of their *order*, were generally the writers of commentaries on the Scriptures, and from a mere love of learning, devoted themselves to the elucidation of the Greek and Hebrew texts, and thu

largely assisted in diffusing truths which had few charms for their own minds. Very justly does M'Crie observe, that "in surveying this portion of history, it is impossible not to admire the arrangements of Providence, when we perceive monks and bishops, cardinals and popes, active in forging and polishing those weapons which were soon to be turned against themselves, and which they afterwards would fain have blunted, and laboured to decry as unlawful and poisoned."*

But it was on the posture of religious affairs in Germany that the eyes of Clement VII. were most attentively bent. Luther having escaped, as we have seen, from his prison in the Wartburg, was now at Wittenberg, denouncing once more the sloth and avarice of the priests, and restraining the forward zeal of his too enthusiastic disciples. In all things he was successful. The Reformation moved rapidly onwards, yet with a steady and certain step. From city it advanced to city, from province to province. In Nuremberg, Frankfort, and Hamburg, with many other German towns; in Zurich and other cities of Switzerland, the popish forms of worship had been abolished by authority (for in those days *perfect* liberty of conscience was understood by none;) the gospel was preached by faithful and godly men; the Scriptures were expounded without slavish reference to the fathers or the theologians of "the church;" and the idolatrous service of the mass was

* "History of the Reformation in Italy," p. 51.

exchanged for the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, administered in a Scriptural way.

But the greatest triumph of all was the publication of the sacred Scriptures themselves in the popular tongue. Luther had employed much of his leisure in the Wartburg in translating the New Testament into German; and at Paris the same work was performed by Lefèvre, an enlightened doctor of the Sorbonne; so that the French, German, and Swiss nations had now, all of them, the opportunity of judging for themselves between the reformers and the priests.

Thus all Germany and Switzerland, with not a small part of France, had been thrown into the greatest agitation. In some places, the priests were assaulted in the performance of their offices; in others, the images of the saints were broken to pieces; and in all the fever of religious controversy was raging with daily increasing strength.

In February, 1524, a diet of the empire was to be held at Nuremberg, and the pope resolved on sending to it a legate who should urge the immediate interposition of imperial authority to check these alarming innovations. The cardinal Campeggio, who was chosen for this office, was a statesman of singular talent, and possessed of all the arts of Italian finesse. On appearing in the assembly, he boldly demanded that the decree of the diet of Worms against the reformers should be forthwith put in execution. But the German barons and princes

were now too much interested in the cause of reform to listen to such a demand. After much altercation, it was decided that the whole business should be put off to a subsequent diet.

Other diets were in fact held, and the religious dissensions of the empire were seriously weighed; but the political system of the age was in so disjointed a state that nothing could be effected; and finally, in August, 1526, the diet of Spires decreed that for the present each state should act according to its own discretion. Thus was liberty of conscience formally conceded to the Protestant party, which accordingly dates its historical existence from that memorable epoch.

But all this interval of suspense to the court of Rome had been diligently improved by Clement VII., and the innumerable emissaries he was able to employ. Campeggio did his best to sow the seeds of animosity (he cared not whether political or ecclesiastical) among the German princes, and by skilfully stirring up all latent bigotry, he succeeded in leaguering together a powerful band of Catholic nobles, who bound themselves to support on all occasions the interests of the church. In Bavaria and Austria similar exertions were made, and the pope himself wrote to the emperor, to warn him that the stability of the empire was no less at stake than the prosperity of the church.

If the emperor had not been so intent on his own ambitious projects, he might have lent an attentive ear to the voice of the pope. But

Charles's whole resources were already engaged. A struggle was now at hand between himself and the king of France, on which depended the continuance of his power in Italy, and even his pre-eminence in the councils of Europe. The duchy of Milan had been both won and lost by Francis I., who was now resolved to make an effort that should not only retrieve his former disasters, but place the whole of Italy in his power.

To accomplish this object, Francis led an army in person across the Alps, to meet the forces which, under the constable Bourbon (who had basely deserted his own sovereign to serve a hostile prince) and the Spanish general Pescara, defended the emperor's dominions in Italy. For three months did the French king lay siege to the well-fortified city of Pavia, thus allowing the imperialist generals ample time to gather and consolidate their strength; and in a battle that was fiercely fought beneath the walls of the town, the French army was utterly defeated, and Francis himself taken prisoner. He was immediately carried captive into Spain; and the year 1525 is memorable in history, not only for the great and decisive battle of Pavia, but for the strange reverse which caused a powerful French sovereign to languish out an autumn and a winter in a dreary Spanish dungeon.

It was only by entering into a treaty involving the greatest sacrifices that Francis was able to regain his liberty. By a solemn oath, he

bound himself to relinquish all his claims to Italy, besides stripping himself of extensive provinces beyond the Alps. But the pope was by no means willing that the emperor should be left to do as he listed on the Italian soil. He was not only jealous of the emperor's growing influence, but indignant that by his intervention the states of Ferrara had been delivered from the grasp of the church. Francis had therefore no sooner returned to his own dominions than Clement established a league between himself, the Venetians, the duke of Milan, and the French king, to expel the imperial forces from Italy, and to place the Milanese crown upon Sforza's head. This league was infamously ratified by the pope's giving a full absolution to Francis I. for the violation of the treaty he had formerly entered into with Charles, and which, although unfairly and ungenerously extorted by the latter under circumstances which left no option of refusal, was nevertheless rendered additionally binding by the sanctity of a solemn oath. Such was the sort of morality then prevalent in Rome, and to which the chief bishop of her degenerate church did not scruple to set the seal of his authority and name.

The emperor's indignation at the treachery of the pope could hardly be kept within bounds. He even forgot, or purposely laid aside, his hereditary devotion to the Roman church. His letters to the German Catholic princes, who were depending upon his aid in withstanding

the progress of reform, now counselled moderation and conciliation, instead of breathing, as before, the hot breath of persecution and hatred. For a while, the reformers were allowed to proceed in peace. Charles even beat up for recruits in the reforming districts of Germany, knowing that he should not want for soldiers when the people were told that they were going to fight against the pope. "Tell them," said he, "that they are going to march against *the Turks*; every one will know what *Turks* are meant."

A new Italian war accordingly broke out, but the vigour of the conflicting states seemed already exhausted. The months wore heavily away, and there was still no prospect of any settlement of the strife. The forces of *the league* were neither of one mind nor in good spirits; and the emperor's numerous army, commanded by Bourbon, was compelled to draw its daily supplies from the unhappy land it was engaged to conquer. Neither did the pontiff act with the decision and promptitude which so urgent a crisis demanded. Suspicious even of his allies, and seeing dangers on every hand, he knew not what course to pursue, and by his vacillation and supineness lost the only opportunity afforded him of maintaining his position.

Impetuous Bourbon could not long be contented with such unsatisfactory warfare. Nor would his fierce soldiers, a promiscuous and unmanageable horde of Germans, Spaniards,

and Italians, be restrained much longer from the rich booty offered by the pillage of Italian cities. They loudly demanded to be marched on Florence, or even Rome, and Bourbon at last yielding to their entreaties and their menaces, determined on the daring exploit of laying siege to the papal metropolis itself, thus intending to punish the pope for his desertion of the imperial cause.

Great was the dismay of the pontiff at the approach of so formidable a foe. His presence of mind wholly forsook him, and he neglected the plainest precautions for the defence of the city. With thirty thousand citizens able to bear arms, who wore swords at their sides, and used them often in their street quarrels, the pope could only contrive to muster a force of five hundred men. By turns he threatened and entreated ; sent messengers to the approaching foe, and then recalled them ; and at last found himself fortified by no better defences than spiritual denunciations, which, though always abundant in the papal arsenals, availed little against an enemy who ridiculed his priestly pretensions, and eagerly thirsted for rapine and bloodshed.

On the 6th of May, 1527, the imperial city of the west was destined to fall once more before the fierce assault of a northern foe. The soldiers of Bourbon were impatient for battle, and before the sun had dispersed the mists which veiled the illustrious capital, the scaling ladders were planted and the attack commenced.

Bourbon himself was the first to mount the ladder, clothed in a white vesture, which made his tall commanding figure a conspicuous mark. He quickly paid the penalty of his bravery or rashness. One of the first bullets fired by the citizens who guarded the walls pierced his side, and he was carried off lifeless to the camp. But his followers were only infuriated by the fall of their leader, and rushing forward in crowds, soon captured the devoted city. A scene of carnage and robbery ensued which baffles description. The pope, in an agony of despair, shut himself up in the castle of St. Angelo, and helplessly waited the result.

The picture given us of the pontiff during this contest is not very creditable to either his humanity or his professions of religion. He employed his favourite artist, Benvenuto Cellini, as engineer in defending the castle against its assailants. Cellini himself expresses the disgust which he felt at his new occupation. Describing the deadly skill with which he succeeded in marking and slaughtering the enemy, he says, "My drawing, my elegant studies, and my taste for music, all vanished before this butchering business, and if I were to give a particular account of all the exploits I performed in this infernal employment I should astonish the world." Yet Clement, the vicar of Christ, the holy father of the church, would daily walk on the ramparts, and when he saw his cannon doing most execution would give utterance to his delight in terms that it

makes the mind shudder to reflect on. A well-aimed ball had cut a Spanish colonel into two pieces, and on the pope's expressing his admiration of the exploit, Cellini says, "Falling upon my knees, I entreated his holiness to absolve me from the guilt of homicide, and likewise from other crimes which I had committed in the service of the church. The pope, lifting up his hands, and making the sign of the cross over me, said that he blessed me, and *gave me his absolution for all the homicides that I had ever committed or ever should commit, in the service of the apostolic church.*"

The victorious army was inflamed with other passions besides those which a rude soldiery always exhibits. Both the Spaniards and the Germans thirsted for revenge ; for Clement had branded the former as infidels, the latter as heretics. Each after his own fashion was now resolved to retaliate on the pope. Whatever articles were esteemed holy, whatever edifices were superstitiously revered, became special objects of attack with the German soldiers. Chalices, pyxes, all silver and golden ornaments belonging to the churches, were unceremoniously swept into the knapsacks of the conquerors. The garments of the priests, and even those of the pope himself, were paraded in the streets by servants and camp-boys in rough and boisterous ridicule. A soldier dressed himself one day in all the state robes of the pontiff, placed the triple crown on his head, and, surrounded by others attired in the scarlet costume

of cardinals, and mounted on asses, went in procession through the streets of the city, receiving on all hands mock homage from the German soldiery.

The revenge of the Spaniards was of a deeper and more sanguinary kind. Nothing could restrain their fury. Even priests and prelates were put to death by them; they spared neither rank, sex, nor age. The pillage of the city, and these scenes of bloodshed and cruel oppression, lasted for ten days. Every house, church, and tomb was ransacked for plunder. Even the jewelled ring, which the corpse of Julius II. still wore on its finger, was carried off. Thousands of victims miserably perished, and the booty amounted to no less than ten millions of golden crowns. The city which Leo X. had taken such pains to adorn and enrich, and which had now begun under pontifical rule to rival the splendours of its imperial prime, was in a few hours despoiled of all its wealth, and in some parts presented to the weeping gaze of the devotee the sad aspect of a dismantled and desolate ruin. No sack of the city under the Goths or Vandals had been equal to this.

The unhappy pope, besieged in the castle of St. Angelo, was reduced to the severest straits. In the hope of being speedily delivered by the troops of the league, he refused to surrender, and was at last compelled, through the failure of supplies, to subsist on asses' flesh. His hopes also were cruelly disappointed, for the forces of the league were commanded by

the duke D'Urbino, who seized the present opportunity of wreaking his revenge upon the house of the Medici. Marching his army sufficiently near to raise the poor pontiff's hopes to the highest pitch—so near, in fact, that the glistening of the lances could be seen from the parapet of the castle—he then suddenly withdrew, pretending that his strength was inadequate to cope with so powerful a foe. Clement only obtained his liberty at last by paying a large sum for ransom, which he unscrupulously raised by the sale of benefices and other offices ; and he was even then kept a prisoner at large until he had surrendered to the emperor all the important citadels and towns belonging to the church.

CHAPTER XI.

PONTIFICATE OF CLEMENT VII. AFTER THE SACK OF
ROME.

A.D. 1527—1534.

ALL papal Europe was indignant at the insults thus heaped on its spiritual chief. The emperor, though secretly rejoicing at his double triumph over two of the greatest sovereigns of the age, Francis and Clement, considered it prudent to disguise his joy, and pretended that the treatment of the pope had not met with his approval. And as all Italy was now beneath his feet, he determined to secure the alliance of the pope by granting him unusual concessions.

The pontiff acted with equal duplicity. Con-

cealing his resentment from Charles, he accepted all the overtures of his imperial master, whilst still belonging to the league confederated against him, thus deceiving all parties alike. There were several motives that prompted him to this course. On the one hand, his patriotism was cooled by the conduct of his own subjects. They treated him with open contempt, scoffed at his illegitimate birth, and expressed delight at his misfortunes, although their own country was involved in the same calamities. They declared that "he was no longer pope;" and Clement bitterly retorted, that "he would rather be the emperor's footman than the butt of his people's scorn." On the other hand, the pontiff saw clearly that nothing but an alliance with Charles would effectually stave off the perils that now environed the papacy.

The Reformation had made great progress during these Italian wars. The forms of Divine service had been simplified and arranged in new order in most German churches. Luther had published the mass in the German tongue, and the clergy were arrayed in habits of plain black and white. Throughout Saxony the churches had been remodelled according to the views of the reformed, and had also been stripped of their ornaments. In many districts, a formal and periodical visitation of the churches was undertaken at the bidding of the princes by the leading reformers, in which they suppressed convents and other popish institutions, established unity of doctrine, and dismissed from their

offices all priests who were convicted of scandalous living. The Reformation had now assumed a definite and organized form.

Nor was it in Germany alone that events like these portended the rising storm. In England, the Lutheran doctrines found ready acceptance, and the king himself was evidently declining in his reverence for the pope. Even in Italy there were unmistakable symptoms of defection from papal rule. The German soldiers of Bourbon had boasted of the freedom from priestly sway enjoyed in their native land; and the seeds of truth which they sowed found a prepared soil in a region where full liberty of opinion, even to licentiousness, had now long been indulged. Pope Clement himself wrote: "With heartfelt grief have we learned that in different parts of Italy the pestiferous heresy of Luther prevails, not only among the laity, but even among ecclesiastics and the regular clergy; so that some by their conversation, and others by what is worse, their public preaching, infect numbers with the disease, to the no small injury of the Catholic faith."

Influenced by these views, the pontiff made all haste to be reconciled to the emperor, and Charles himself was not backward in accepting his proposals; for a danger now menaced western Europe, which made it highly important that all parties should be united. The Turks were making rapid progress in conquest, and had already pitched their tents beneath the walls of Vienna. An army of 250,000

victorious veterans, breathing Mussulman vengeance against Christians of all sects, might well excite the profoundest anxieties. Luther and the pope both agreed to preach a new crusade ; and the emperor, desirous of composing the Italian dissensions, readily concluded a private treaty with Clement, by which he confirmed the pontiff in all his former possessions, promised to re-establish the power of the Medici in Florence, and engaged hereafter to support the church in all her struggles with schismatic reformers.

But even before this treaty was fully concluded, the reformers had struck a blow which awakened new fears in the breast of the pope, while it aroused the indignation of the emperor, against whose authority it was directly aimed.

At a diet of the empire held in the city of Spires in 1529, the emperor had commissioned his brother Ferdinand to announce that the decree of the former diet, which had allowed liberty of action to all states in matters of religion, was now absolutely annulled by imperial command. This act of despotic power was seconded by a decree of the present diet, (which was either awed by the boldness of the emperor, or cajoled by the arts of the papal legates,) prohibiting the reformers from making any further innovations, and especially from abolishing the mass, before the meeting of a *general council*.

Against a decree so subversive of religious liberty, and so hostile to the diffusion of truth, six sovereign princes of Germany and fourteen

free cities were found faithful and brave enough to record a solemn *protest*. "We protest before God," was their noble and truly Christian language, "that we, for ourselves and our people, neither consent nor adhere, in any manner whatsoever, to the proposed decree, in anything that is contrary to God, to his holy word, to our right conscience, and to the salvation of the soul."

Thenceforth the reformers of all shades were known as PROTESTANTS; and the Reformation had received a name.

The alliance between the emperor and the pope was ratified in the year 1530, when the former was paying a visit to his Italian subjects. Charles was received in Italy with great apprehension and distrust. His name had been connected in the minds of the Italians only with oppression, persecution, and cruelty, and they naturally dreaded the approach of such a master to their shores. But Charles carefully acted his part, and, anxious to conciliate, charmed his new subjects by his graceful carriage and his generous behaviour.

Proceeding from Genoa to Bologna at the head of twenty-five thousand men, the emperor was there greeted by the pope, who received in return the most humble salutations from the conquering chief. Charles kissed the pontiff's foot, and was then conducted to a palace adjoining that of Clement. A doorway was opened in the wall which divided the two palaces, and the intercourse of the sovereigns

was soon established on a friendly and familiar footing. In compliance with Clement's earnest request, the power of the Medici was now forcibly re-established in Florence; and the pope's fondest desires were all satisfied, except in the case of Ferrara. This duchy the emperor steadily refused to transfer from the duke, its rightful owner; a refusal which Clement could neither forgive nor forget. The pontiff, however, effectually succeeded in prejudicing the young emperor's mind against the Protestant cause; and when Charles had received the ancient honour of coronation amidst general rejoicings and festivities, he left Italy for Germany, with the firm resolution of putting down, at all risks, the dangerous innovations in religion which the reformers had introduced.

It is beside our purpose to give a particular account of the celebrated diet of Augsburg, which immediately took place, as the pontiff was only represented there in the person of his legate; but the events of that diet, altogether so memorable, and so influential on the destinies of the popedom, must not be wholly overlooked. Nor can the public acts of the legate Campeggio be regarded in any other light than as the public acts of pope Clement VII. himself.

Both Reformers and Romanists had anxiously expected the meeting of this assembly, the former hoping to have liberty of conscience guaranteed, the latter to see it annihilated for ever. In the midst of a magnificent court, with

such pomp and splendour as had never before been witnessed in Germany,* Charles seated himself at the head of the diet, and reluctantly prepared himself to listen to dry theological discussions. Much to the annoyance of the Romanists, the Reformers were allowed, after a sort, to plead their own cause. An elaborate exposition of their doctrines, since known as the "Confession of Augsburg," had been drawn up by Melancthon, and was now read in the audience of the emperor and all the chief princes and prelates of the empire.

This "Confession" was swiftly transmitted to Rome, and in sixteen days a message came from the pope, earnestly insisting that there should be *no discussion*, that the decrees of the diet of Worms should be fully carried out, and those of the more recent diet of Spires as absolutely revoked.

The emperor, nevertheless, commanded the Romanist doctors to prepare a refutation of the Confession, for if its doctrines should remain undisputed, how, with any decency, could its framers and abettors be punished? The refutation was accordingly drawn up—"a feeble production," we are told by a candid writer—and was also publicly read. And thus ended the farce of discussion.

The legate Campeggio now whispered in the emperor's ear the steps that were necessary for

* The imperial robes alone, all blazing with diamonds and pearls, were said to be worth 20,000 ducats! about £10,000 in English money; perhaps equal to £40,000 at the present day.

the suppression of heresy and the due protection of the church. His suggestions were truly popish ; they breathed nothing but vengeance and cruelty. " Let the emperor and the well-affected princes," said the legate, " form a league. Let promises and threats be unsparingly used. If threatenings should fail, proceed to confiscate the property of all Protestants, from the elector down to the burghess. The mastery once obtained, let inquisitors be sent, who shall punish heretics without mercy, shall burn all their books, and shall send back to their convents all monks who have escaped, there to be treated according to the rules of their order. And if any should still obstinately persist in this diabolical way, let his majesty put hand to fire and sword, and destroy to the very roots the cursed and poisonous plant."

To these fierce suggestions from the pope's ambassador the emperor was unable, and perhaps unwilling to give effect. But the final decree of this imperial diet was quite severe enough to alarm and exasperate the Protestant party. It forbade them to preach, print, or in any way publish their doctrines ; and whilst holding out the hope that a General Council would shortly be called to settle all religious disputes, commanded them before next spring to come to accommodation with the Catholic church.

Next spring! The spring was the time for bringing armies into the field and commencing campaigns. It was plainly the emperor's inten-

tion to decide this question of religious faith and a free conscience by the sword. The Protestants, however, continued firm. "We deny," they courageously said, "the emperor's power to command in matters of faith." And so these conflicting parties separated, to meet again upon a very different field, a field of carnage and blood. But this was not to be just yet.

While the Protestant confederates were concerting their measures at Smalcald, the pope was engaged in a business which threatened to raise up other, and perhaps more powerful enemies to the papal domination. Henry VIII. of England had been desirous ever since 1527 to be divorced from his queen, Catherine of Arragon, who was aunt to the emperor. As long as the success of Charles in his Italian wars was at all doubtful, the pope had feigned perfect willingness to comply, but nevertheless sent his confidential legate Campeggio to England to delay the matter until his true position should be ascertained. The successes of the emperor had now bound Clement to him hand and foot, and he therefore issued a brief, forbidding Henry to divorce Catherine upon pain of excommunication from the bosom of the church. The duplicity of Clement's character, combined with the real perplexities of his position, caused this affair to be protracted through several years; and innumerable messages and messengers passed to and fro between the Roman and English courts, without any satisfactory conclusion being reached.

The pope, however, inwardly groaned at his irksome and degrading bondage to Charles. He bitterly resented the separation of Ferrara from the states of the church, and chafed whenever he thought of the general council which the emperor had promised to the Protestants. When Charles, too, on revisiting Italy in 1532, after his conquest of the Turks, besought Clement to delay no longer a measure so needful for the peace of the empire, his patience was quite exhausted, and though he still counterfeited friendship, he secretly meditated revenge.

Charles had no sooner left Italy than the pope entered into communication with the king of France, and acquainted him with his feelings. Francis was delighted to see that at length there was some prospect of dissolving that alliance between the pope and the emperor, which alone had prevented him from holding possession of Milan, and he eagerly invited the pontiff to a personal meeting, when their measures could be carefully and conjointly laid. Clement, equally ardent, actually ventured on a voyage by sea for the purpose, and, in the autumn of 1533, met Francis at Marseilles. It was then agreed that Francis should use all his influence with the Protestant party, and by offering to furnish the supplies of money, should induce them to attack the emperor on the side of Austria. This extraordinary compact was then sealed by the marriage of the king's second son, Henry, to Catherine de' Medici, daughter to a cousin of the pope.

In this alliance we may see the strange embarrassment into which the pontiff was brought by holding under one crown both spiritual and temporal jurisdiction. His religious ties and animosities would have leagued him with the emperor against the Protestants; his political exigencies brought him into alliance with Francis and the Protestants against the emperor. Stimulated by the French king, Philip of Hesse, the most warlike of the Protestant princes, commenced a war with Austria, in which his success was beyond his most sanguine hopes. It was attended, too, by the most important religious results. Thus the immediate consequence of the pope's political ambition was the rapid spread of the reformed opinions; so that Wirtemberg, the palatinate, and several other German states, now followed the example of Saxony, and "in a few years the Reformation of the church extended through the whole of Lower Germany, and had permanently established its seat in Upper Germany."*

Yet at the very time that Clement was thus indirectly waging war with the emperor, he openly professed to be his ally. In the question of Henry VIII.'s divorce, he suffered himself to be wholly guided by the will of Charles, and, in 1533, published the bull which excommunicated the English king. In the spring of 1534, the English parliament enacted that papal supremacy should cease to be acknowledged in the British Isles; and thus, the same year which

* Ranke, book i. chapter iii.

saw Germany promoting and establishing the Reformation, witnessed also the final separation of England from the dominion of the pope.

This calamitous year for the papacy was also the year of Clement's death. Clement has been pronounced by Ranke, not without reason, "the most ill-fated pontiff that ever sat upon the papal throne." His misfortunes arose chiefly, no doubt, from the violent commotions of the age, but it is also manifest that they were often occasioned by his own utter destitution of principle and honour. He entered into the most solemn treaties without the intention of keeping them, and violated the most sacred promises and oaths without hesitation. Of his thorough truthlessness a striking proof is given by the gossiping Cellini, who, from his artistic skill, was a great favourite with the pope. Cellini had been commissioned by Clement to design and execute a magnificent golden chalice to hold the sacramental wine in the pontifical processions. His progress was somewhat slow, and the pope, who, like all the Medici, was passionately fond of the arts, began to grow impatient to see the chalice. He ordered it to be sent for his inspection ; but Cellini, who was well acquainted with Clement's character, refused to part with it until he had been paid. Persuasion and menaces proved equally unavailing, and at last Clement sent the governor of the exchequer to say, that if the work were put in a box and carried to the palace, he would engage *upon his word* to return it without even opening the

box; but that he desired this because his honour was at stake, as he had so often expressed a resolution to get possession of the chalice. "To these words," says Benvenuto, "I answered, smiling, that I would very readily put my work into his hands in the manner he required, because I was desirous to know what dependence could be placed on the word of a pope. I therefore gave it to the governor sealed up in the manner required. The governor having carried the box to his holiness sealed up as above, the pope, after turning it over several times, as I was afterwards informed by the governor, asked the latter if he had seen the work. He answered that he had, and it had been sealed up in his presence, adding that it appeared to him a very extraordinary performance. Upon which the pope said, 'You may tell Benvenuto that Roman pontiffs have authority to loose and bind things of much greater importance than this;' and whilst uttering these words, he, with an angry look, opened the box, taking off the cord and seal." Benvenuto adds, that when the chalice was returned to him for completion, and the pope's message had been delivered, he loudly exclaimed, "I thank Heaven that I am now able to set a just value on the word of God's vicegerent."

Who can wonder that Clement VII. was mistrusted by all the monarchs of his age, or that the papacy itself should have fallen into such deep contempt, when profanity and falsehood were thus shamelessly indulged in by a pontiff on an occasion so pitifully frivolous?

CHAPTER XII.

PONTIFICATE OF PAUL III., TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE JESUITS AND THE INQUISITION.

A.D. 1534—1543.

THE cardinal Farnese was the next successful candidate for the chair of St. Peter, and on commencing his pontificate assumed the title of PAUL III. His moral character was very similar to that of his immediate predecessors, and was marked by most of the faults which distinguished Italian society at that period. His early life had been passed in voluptuous pleasures, mingled with the cultivation of a taste for refined and intellectual pursuits. In the gardens and museums of Lorenzo de' Medici, he had learned by the side of Leo x. to appreciate the relics of ancient genius and art. He had both the vices and the virtues, if we can so term them, of that demoralized and sensual, but polished circle of men who were entertained in the palaces of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

The claims of Paul to the popedom were based rather on the nobility of his blood than on any real qualification for the conduct of affairs at so critical a time. He had felt keen disappointment when Adrian iv., and still more when Clement vii. was elected to the papal chair. He thought he had at least a better title to the honour than a second scion of the Medician stock. But notwithstanding his chagrin, he had conducted himself so prudently that he offended no party, and even in that age

of fierce partisanship in both politics and religion, it would have been hard to tell, when Paul III. ascended the papal throne, to what side in any controversy his temper was likely to incline.

This extreme cautiousness, which was, indeed, the most remarkable feature in his character, still made itself prominent after his elevation. He carefully examined his position before ever proceeding to act, and thoughtfully weighed every word before pronouncing a decision. Thus Paul III. skilfully steered his course between the Spanish rocks and the French quicksands, between heretical Protestant eddies and orthodox Romish shallows, and continued, notwithstanding all difficulties, to accumulate honours and wealth for the Farnese family.

Although destitute of religious principle himself, Paul's sagacity had not failed to perceive that the tendency of the age was decidedly against that languid indifferency which had prevailed for centuries past, and he anxiously watched for opportunities of enlisting the spirit of religious earnestness in the service of the papal see. The reformed opinions had made considerable progress even in Italy; and in every city and town, in the universities and monasteries, amongst the nobility and prelacy, there were many to be found who held some of the truths developed by the German reformers. But in Italy all men shuddered at the bare idea of a revolt against the papacy, and the

utmost that even the enlightened Italians either hoped for or desired was the prevalence of a somewhat purer gospel in the pulpit, and the removal of all flagrant and palpable abuses in the discipline of the clergy.

The desire, however, to give greater vitality and energy to their degenerate church became a bond of sympathy and union between some of the most illustrious Italians of that period. Hence had arisen the "Oratory of Divine Love," an association of learned men, who met for prayer and mutual edification. A little later, the *Order of the Theatines* was instituted by the same class of men, for the purpose of giving more public expression to their sentiments and views. They took a rigorous vow of poverty; they visited the sick in the hospitals; they preached in all churches with an unwonted fervour; and they undertook to train the rising priesthood to severer habits of morality and self-denial. United, however, as they were in these pursuits, there was a wide difference of character between them; some burning with zeal for the exaltation of the papacy and the suppression of heretics, others strongly inclining to Protestant doctrines and usages.

It was this class of men that the new pontiff desired to engage in his service, and one of his earliest and best measures was to strengthen the papacy by adding to the conclave a few of these ardent spirits. Gaspar Contarini, an aristocratic Venetian, was the first to receive

the honour, and none could be more astonished than himself when the news was conveyed to him. He was wholly devoid of personal ambition, and was desirous rather of privately spreading truth than of encountering the difficulties and temptations which beset a public and exalted station. At his suggestion, the cardinal's hat was afterwards conferred upon the fiery-spirited Caraffa, the elegant Sadolet, Pole, the associate of Wolsey in the legatine judgment on Henry VIII.'s divorce, and some others equally eminent for their abilities and zeal.

But neither Paul's circumstances nor his disposition permitted him to proceed hastily with any reform of the church. He was naturally too cautious to take ill-advised steps, and at present the political condition of Italy demanded his chief care. For a time, all plans of ecclesiastical reforms were placed in total abeyance.

It was the continual rivalry of the emperor and Francis that chiefly absorbed the attention of the pope. The restless king of France had again entered Italy at the head of a large army, and on his route to Milan had laid waste the territories of the duke of Savoy, who was related to the emperor by marriage. Eagerness to retain Milan in his own power, vanity at his recent exploits amongst the piratical states of Africa, and perhaps resentment at the treatment his relative had received, determined Charles to oppose Francis in person, and in 1536 he passed through Rome for that pur-

pose. Halting for a few days in the papal city, he called together the consistory, and harangued the pope and his clergy on the indignities he had sustained from the ambition and faithlessness of Francis. Growing warm in his invectives, he at last challenged the French king to a single combat, by which all their quarrels should be decided. "Let us contend," he shouted, "man to man, with what arms he pleases to choose, in our shirts, on an island, a bridge, or aboard a galley moored in a river. Let the duchy of Burgundy be his stake, and that of Milan be mine; and when this struggle is ended, let the united forces of Germany, Spain, and France, be employed to humble the power of the Turks, and to extirpate heresy out of Christendom."

The emperor, despite his anger, had skillfully touched a tender string in the pontifical breast. It was indeed Paul's most ardent wish to see these quarrels terminated between potentates who might then become dutiful and devoted sons of the church. He recommended peace, and offered his services to procure it; but Charles was too much inflamed by ambition and revenge to listen to such proposals at present.

The war therefore continued to rage, and for a whole year Italy and the south of France were convulsed by the alarms and cruelties ever attendant on the steps of this dread persecutor of the human race. But by the end of that time, Charles's finances were exhausted,

without any decided or signal success having been gained, and he was not unwilling to accept the pope's mediation in proposing and arranging the articles of a peace.

The three potentates, Charles, Francis, and the pope, proceeded to Nice for the purpose of conference; but on their arrival there the two disputants refused to see each other, and it seemed certain that they would never come to terms. Paul, however, was so zealous in the affair that his energy at length gained a complete triumph, though not until he had threatened to leave Nice if some arrangement were not effected. A truce of ten years was agreed upon, and although the monarchs would not meet to sign the treaty, yet a short time afterwards, when Charles was driven by stress of weather into a French port, Francis received him with all possible gallantry and politeness, and the emperor accepted his hospitality with every appearance of sincerity and good-will.

Paul did not forget his own interests in thus securing the peace of Christendom. The emperor engaged to marry his natural daughter, Margaret of Austria, to Ottavio Farnese, the pope's grandson, and transferred to his son, Pier Luigi, the entire government of the territory of Novara. Francis, not to be behindhand, promised to give the duke of Vendome, a prince of royal blood, in marriage to Vittoria, the pontiff's grand-daughter; so that the house of Farnese now bid fair to rival in wealth and influence that of the Medici.

But while these momentous events were agitating the political world, the men who were more mindful of religion than of politics, and who cared more for the church than for the state, had industriously sought to promote the ecclesiastical changes which they thought needful for the welfare of the church. The Theatines were becoming daily more active, and on every occasion were urging the pope to the adoption of measures which should give their views a practical and complete expression.

Since, however, the Theatines themselves were divided into two parties, the one inclined to Protestant opinions, and the other chiefly solicitous to strengthen the hierarchy, and, like their prototypes in the days of Gregory VII., expecting to effect this by conceding in the first place certain articles of reform, we need not be surprised that from the same body two opposite movements should arise. Of the former class the chief representative was Gaspar Contarini, and Giovanni Caraffa was the most prominent leader of the latter.

Ever since his elevation to the conclave, Contarini had made it his labour to seek a real reform of the prevalent abuses, both in discipline and doctrine. He had composed various treatises on the subject, and had submitted them to the pope; but the wary temper of Paul, allowing him to do nothing from principle, but consenting to whatever seemed most expedient, had almost extinguished the hopes

of the zealous reformer. At last, Paul affected to think that the happy moment had arrived.

On a bright cheerful day in November, 1538, Contarini journeyed, he tells us, with the pontiff to Ostia. "On the way thither, this our good old man made me sit beside him, and talked with me alone about our projected reforms. He told me that he had by him the little treatise I had written on the subject, and that he had read it in his morning hours. I had already given up all hope, but he now spoke to me with such Christian feeling that my hopes have been wakened anew. I now believe that God will do some great thing, and not permit the gates of hell to prevail against his Holy Spirit."

But Contarini was again doomed to disappointment. A few petty reforms in the details of administration were effected, and there the matter ended. The doctrine and discipline, the essential corruptions of Rome, continued unaltered; and, although there were some at Rome who, fretted with perpetual strife, were willing to concede much to the Protestants for the sake of healing the unsightly breach in the church; (and for this purpose Contarini was actually appointed by Paul as his legate in a conference held at Ratisbon between the contending parties;) yet, when their differences came to be discussed, it was soon manifest that the time for reconciliation had quite gone by. The reformers of Rome were a very small minority, and neither the pope nor

the conclave would assent to the Protestant demands. With the most eager desire, for the church's own sake, to succeed, Contarini was obliged to desist, and it became daily more evident that it was not from *his* branch of the Theatine order that the Romish church was destined to receive an infusion of new strength.

Amongst the Theatines of Venice, in the year 1538, was a man of extraordinary character. He was a Spaniard of noble descent, and had formerly served in the Spanish army during the wars of Charles v. As a soldier, none could surpass him for courage and gallantry; his ardour had more of the spirit of chivalry than of ordinary military life. Burning for fame, he emulated the daring exploits ascribed by the writers of romance to their favourite heroes, and his chief model and pattern amongst them was the renowned Amadis of Gaul.

Cut short in his warlike career by incurable wounds received at the siege of Pampeluna, Ignatius Loyola (for it is of him we speak) revolved projects for achieving a splendid fame in far different pursuits. From boyhood, a sort of religious enthusiasm had mingled itself with his zeal for a soldier's life, and now he fancied that he had been arrested by Providence in his worldly course, to win a loftier renown in the field of spiritual warfare. He conceived of Christ as a king who had resolved to subjugate all unbelievers, and whose camp, pitched at Jerusalem, was opposed to that of Satan, whose head-quarters were at Babylon. He imagined

that whosoever would fight beneath the banners of Christ must be fed with the same food, must be clad in similar attire, must endure the same hardships and vigils, and according to the measure of his deeds, would be admitted to share in the victory and the reward.

In conformity with this notion of spiritual knighthood, Loyola devoted himself to the service of Christ, after the manner in which knights-errant commenced their perilous career. All night he watched before a picture of the virgin, kneeling or standing, and reciting prayers, with a pilgrim's staff in his hands, and while his relinquished weapons and armour were suspended on the walls. Next day, he gave away his knightly dress, and assuming the coarse garb of a hermit, set off on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

We shall not follow him in all his wanderings. We find him ere long at Paris, studying theology ; practising austere penances to manifest the entire and absolute devotion of his body and soul to the service of Christ ; and drawing under his influence, as a strong and enthusiastic will often does, minds that were otherwise far superior to his own. Of these companions the most remarkable were Francis Xavier, afterwards the missionary to India, and Lainez, the chief organizer of the system to which Loyola had given birth. With these and a few others Ignatius formed a solemn league, vowing to live in poverty, and to devote their days to what seemed the most arduous and dangerous

of all religious undertakings, the conversion of the Saracens.

It was on this very enterprise that Loyola and his friends had proceeded as far as Venice, when the Theatines of that city attracted their attention, and made them hesitate in their course. In this Order, Loyola saw that zeal and self-denial were combined with that complete devotion to superior authority which he, bred in camps, regarded as the first of all virtues. Becoming intimate with Caraffa, Ignatius took up his abode in the convent, and served in the hospitals which Caraffa superintended. He now perceived that as Eastern adventures were made impossible for him by a variety of circumstances, his proper course would be to adopt the rules of the Theatines for himself and his company, with such modifications as his own judgment might direct.

“In pursuit of this conviction,” says Ranke, “he took priest’s orders, with all his companions; and after forty days of prayer he began to preach in Vicenza, together with three others of his society. On the same day, and at the same hour, they appeared in different streets, mounted on stones, waved their hats, and with loud cries exhorted the people to repentance.”

In the year 1540, Loyola and his associates visited Rome. On leaving Venice, they determined to journey by different roads, and in prospect of their separation, they established rules for a fixed conformity of life even when apart. As strangers might possibly inquire

their profession, they resolved, as a company of soldiers takes the name of its captain, to call themselves the *Company of Jesus*, in accordance with their leader's old military propensities, and in token of its being their intention to make war as soldiers against the legions of Satan.

On arriving in Rome, Ignatius presented himself to the pope, and fully described to him the objects embraced by the society he had formed. Although the extreme caution of Paul made him suspicious at first, he soon found that he had here such materials of usefulness to the papacy as were seldom to be met with. Elsewhere there were heresy and insubordination; here there was blind devotion to papal interests, for *obedience* was with Loyola a cardinal virtue, and formed the basis of his entire system. On all sides, the pontiff saw a selfish worldliness which constantly led to divisions and desertion; here there was self-denying energy, willing to dedicate itself without reserve to papal authority, and swearing to perform whatever the reigning pontiff should command,—"to go forth into all lands, among Turks, heathen, or heretics, wherever he might please to direct, without hesitation or delay, without question, condition, or reward." By such flattering terms Paul was quickly won; and though at first he gave his sanction to their institute with certain restrictions, in the course of three years the SOCIETY OF JESUS was absolutely and unconditionally established as a branch of the papal system.

Nor was Paul III. willing to wait until the aid of these new allies could be effectually rendered, before taking active steps for the suppression of heresy, at least in the papal states. Conversing one day with the cardinal Caraffa, he inquired "What remedy could be devised for the schismatic propensities that were becoming so alarmingly prevalent?" The cardinal replied, that "the only certain cure was a *thoroughly searching inquisition.*"

The ancient inquisition, instituted as we have seen in the days of Innocent III. by the fierce and fanatical Dominic, had long since fallen to decay. It was the restoration of this terrible engine that Caraffa now urgently counselled. "As St. Peter," exclaimed he, "subdued the heresiarchs in no other place but Rome, so must the successors of Peter destroy all the heresies of the whole world in Rome." The proposal of Caraffa was strenuously supported by Loyola, and the pope gave directions forthwith for the revival of the Inquisition.

And what were the faults which this terrible instrument was designed to extirpate or punish? Not crimes against humanity and morals, but presumed errors in judgment, and avowed differences in faith! The papal metropolis was at this time a foul sink of all species of immorality. Murder was committed in broad day; bravoës were hired for trifling sums to put to death unhappy offenders against the dignity or the caprice of a cardinal or a bishop. The pope's own illegitimate son, Pier Luigi, was

one of the most lawless and abandoned in a lawless and abandoned state. From the sovereign pontiff to the meanest citizen, all were depraved and vicious, and scarcely thought it needful to preserve even the forms of decorum in the resolute pursuit of their ends. Thus the murderer and adulterer, the cheat and the slanderer, were suffered to sin on with impunity ; but should any thoughtful and sincere man presume to question the infallibility of the pope in matters of religious faith, or openly to censure the flagrant vices of the priesthood, the inquisition straightway seized him, and whatever his character or rank, threw him into prison, confiscated his estates, and finally took away his life.

So eager was Caraffa to carry into effect the new powers entrusted to his care, that he caused his own house to be fitted up with rooms for the officers, and prisons for the accused. Dungeons, chains, bolts, locks, blocks, and thumbscrews, were quickly heaped together. In a short time, the agents of the inquisition were in every Italian city, and so rigorous were their proceedings, that a contemporary writer exclaims in despair, "Scarcely is it possible to be a Christian and die quietly in one's bed." Colleges were broken up ; convents were strictly searched ; literary men were carefully watched ; booksellers were prohibited from selling books that had not been previously examined ; and an *index* was now first made out of heretical books, which the

deluded people were enjoined neither to purchase nor to read. Very soon the work of bloodshed began in good earnest. In Rome, the *auto-da-fé* blazed at regular intervals before the church of Santa Maria della Minerva. In Venice, the heretic was carried beyond the lagoons in a boat which was always attended by a second. On arriving in the open sea, a plank was laid between the boats, and the condemned man being placed on it, the rowers pulled in opposite directions, and the waves closed over their victim for ever.

Thus the first utterances of sincere faith in this age of hollow pretensions to religion were gagged by the strong arm of the pope, and persecution and dismay boldly asserted their dominion wherever his influence could send them. It were only an insult to the reader to point out the discrepancy between a church so governed and the church of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

PONTIFICATE OF PAUL III. AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JESUITS.
A.D. 1543—1550.

WHILST Paul III. was thus intent on strangling the Protestantism of Italy in its cradle, and those future foes of the Reformation—the Jesuits—were steadily maturing their strength and preparing for a deadly conflict, the Pro-

testants of Germany were rapidly gaining accessions to their cause, and were not a little aided in this by political events. Those ambitious rivals, Francis I. and Charles V., could not long maintain the concord which seemed so happily commenced at Nice, and in less than four years all Europe was once more ringing with the harsh din of war. Christendom was scandalized at the sight of a professedly Christian monarch, the French king, entering into alliance with that inveterate enemy of the faith, the sultan of Turkey. Francis appeared indeed to have no alternative, for his ambition and waywardness had alienated from him all the princes to whom he might else have appealed for help. He therefore prepared to invade the Milanese possessions of the emperor on the side of Piedmont, while sultan Solyman marched a vast army into Hungary, with which he hoped to reach Italy, and perhaps even Rome.

To withstand so formidable a league, Charles saw that it was needful to consolidate without delay all the force of the empire; and as religion was always with him the mere instrument of policy, he determined on gaining over the Protestant princes, although he was certain of incurring thereby the severest displeasure of the pope.

At the diet of Spire, held in 1544, the emperor accordingly agreed that no further proceedings should be taken against the Protestant party, that they should be allowed the

free exercise of their religion, and that a general council should be speedily summoned to re-establish if possible the broken peace of the church. The Protestant princes were so gratified with these remarkable concessions that they took the field with a numerous army, resolved on upholding the integrity of the empire against the united power of Francis and the Grand Turk.

The hostilities which ensued produced no further effects than those of devastating some of the fairest provinces of Italy and France, and impoverishing the imperial treasury. Both parties were at length wearied of the struggle, and towards the close of the year Charles and Francis concluded a peace, the conditions of which seemed to promise a permanent alliance between these powerful monarchs. The duke of Orleans was to marry the emperor's daughter or niece, Francis was to renounce for ever his designs against Milan, and both sovereigns were to join in making war against the common enemy, the Turk.

And now the time drew near for a more systematic and desperate onset against the transalpine reformation. Repeatedly urged by the emperor, and himself alarmed at the rapid growth of the schism in the church, the pope could at last do no other, however reluctantly, than summon the general council which had so long been demanded in vain. Innumerable objections had been made, and obstacles thrown in the way, both by Clement VII. and by Paul III. ;

and so long as half Europe was distracted by war it was not possible to convene a large number of the clergy. Now, however, the council was actually summoned; the bishops of the empire received Charles's peremptory orders to attend it; and in December, 1545, the famous *Council of Trent*, the last council of the Romish church, commenced those deliberations which were destined to so many years' wearisome protractions, and afterwards to influence so largely the history and character of the papacy for successive ages.

No delegates whatever were sent by the Protestants to this council. They probably felt, as they justly might, that there was no room to hope for a reconciliation between themselves and the hierarchy of Rome. But the excuse which they gave to the emperor was, that they could not admit the pope's authority to call a council of the whole church, in which he was only one amongst a multitude of bishops; and that no fairness could be expected from an assembly convened under papal influence, presided over by papal legates, and held in a city closely bordering on the papal domains. The decisions of the Council of Trent were, therefore, wholly uninfluenced by the arguments of Protestant theologians.

The emperor had urged that the subject of reform in discipline should be considered first of all, as it was obviously needful to convince the world that so august an assembly would by no means connive at the crying abuses of the

church. But this was altogether opposed to the views of the pope, who was only desirous of applying a check to the spread of sentiments that menaced his supremacy, and dreaded beyond all things a searching inquiry into the abuses on which the papacy fattened and throve. The council, therefore, decided that the two subjects, discipline and doctrine, should be considered side by side, and took such good care to give the latter precedence, that in effect the former was wholly neglected.

In settling the rule of faith, which was the first subject of discussion, the council agreed that the *traditions* of the church were to be regarded with all the reverence due to Holy Scripture itself; thus overturning at a stroke the foundation of all the Protestant doctrines, and we may add the foundation of all consistent and truthful theology. After this, it was easy to decide that the sinner is not justified through faith in the atonement of Christ alone; and the gate was thrown wide open for the undue elevation of the sacraments recognised in Scripture, the introduction of others unwarranted by the word of God, and the triumphant re-establishment of a dominant and tyrannizing priesthood.

Whilst the council was thus busily regulating the creed of future generations, the emperor and the pope were revolving new political schemes. Never was the crafty dissimulation of Charles v., or the unscrupulous worldliness of Paul III., more thoroughly discovered than in

the measures they now adopted. Pretending only friendship and amity, the emperor was growing daily more jealous of the increasing strength of the Protestants, and was secretly devising means for their overthrow. At length, he boldly threw off the mask, and openly declared war against the confederacy of Smalcald. In this enterprise, he was warmly assisted by the pope, who furnished his full proportion both of troops and of money.

The success of these warlike operations exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the allied potentates. Germany was quickly reduced to submission; the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse were taken captive by the imperial forces; and Charles found himself in a position to dictate what terms he pleased to the Protestant party.

But now the pontiff became alarmed at the advancing power of the emperor. Germany once at his feet, the states of Italy would soon have no independence remaining, and the church, that is to say, her territorial possessions, would be wholly at the mercy of a secular prince. Dismayed at this prospect more than at the most woful schisms or heresies, Paul withdrew all his forces from the emperor's army, and at the same time removed the council from Trent to Bologna, that no steps might be taken in the direction of weakening the papal prerogative. He further wrote to Francis I., exhorting him to "succour those who were still holding out against the emperor,

and were not yet overborne." Once more the pope felt that his cause was one with that of the Protestants, and for the moment he heartily wished them success. So completely did political considerations overbalance the most serious questions of religion with the pontiffs of that age!

The pope's animosity towards the emperor was fully participated in and more recklessly displayed by the pontiff's favourite son, Pier Luigi Farnese. That lawless and dissipated man had long aimed at making himself sole master of Parma and Placentia, a project which the emperor stoutly opposed as a gross alienation of church property for the aggrandizement of the Farnese, and not less as tending to diminish his own influence in Italy by multiplying the number of her independent princes. Enraged at the emperor's opposition, Pier Luigi urged all the Italian powers to commence hostilities against Charles, and carried his enmity to such a pitch as to excite against himself the personal hatred of all who espoused the emperor's cause. Five nobles of Placentia at last entered into a secret league to rid their city by one blow of an usurper's tyranny, and so to recommend themselves to Charles's favour. Their plot succeeded. They murdered the depraved Farnese in his own palace, and then made themselves masters of the city.

Incensed at the emperor's estrangement, mortified at his own loss of power, and stung to madness by the death of his favourite son, there

was no act of hostility which Paul would not gladly have undertaken, had not dread of the imperial vengeance restrained him. But Paul's was a nature, as Ranke justly observes, "that great reverses render spiritless, feeble, and vacillating."

His cup of bitterness was not yet full. Despairing of keeping the duchy of Placentia for his own house, Paul now resolved on restoring it to the church, and so at least wrenching it from the grasp of the emperor. But here he met with opposition where he least expected it—from his own grandsons. These young men had long cherished the hope, indeed the expectation, of making that duchy their own, and they now resolutely opposed its restoration to the church. Paul was astounded at meeting with resistance from those who, while he sought their advancement, had always professed implicit submission to his will. His only consolation in this new misfortune was the thought that at least Alexander Farnese remained faithful to him, and would not despise his authority. But when at length the unhappy old man discovered that Alexander also was privy to their design, and had aided them in their plot, his heart was completely broken, and he refused all sympathy and comfort. Summoning the cardinal Alexander to his presence, he violently rated him for his ungrateful conduct, and becoming more enraged as he spoke, he tore his nephew's cap from his hand, and dashed it to the ground. So vehement an agitation of mind was more

than his feeble and tottering frame could bear. He was eighty-three years of age, and nature reeling under the rude shock she had received, he fell dangerously ill, and expired in a few days.

Most pitiable old man! Who would envy him his power or the splendour of his state, coupled with a life which had been, not a blessing, but a curse to the world, a remorseful conscience, a rebellious progeny, and must it not be feared, the tremendous consummation of a soul unsaved?

CHAPTER XIV.

PONTIFICATES OF JULIUS III. AND MARCELLUS II.

A.D. 1550—1555.

THE influence of the deceased pope was still felt in the conclave. The cardinals whom he had raised to the purple were naturally devoted to his interests, and his grandson Ottavio Farnese now leagued these together to secure the election of one who should still favour the views of the Farnese house. The cardinal de Monte was the successful candidate, and it is said that he himself decided the wavering minds of his partisans by promising to make them all his confidants and friends. He assumed the title of Julius in remembrance of Julius II., of whose court he had been the chamberlain.

JULIUS III. was already nearly seventy years of age, yet by no means weary of the pleasures and dissipations then prevalent in Rome. He

immediately conciliated the Farnese by conceding to Ottavio the duchy of Parma, and then announced his determination to keep up a firm alliance with the emperor through the whole of his popedom. In pursuance of this resolution, he gave orders for the general council to be re-assembled at Trent ; and the German bishops, now hopeful of some kind of reform, attended in considerable numbers. The Protestants, also, made some attempt to unite with it, but finding all just and equitable terms sternly refused them, they at length finally withdrew, and the council proceeded to build on the foundation which they had laid in the former pontificate. They now determined that the *real presence* of Christ in the sacramental bread and wine was the true doctrine of the church ; that the host ought, therefore, to be adored ; and that auricular confession was an indispensable pre-requisite for communion. Left wholly to themselves, the anti-Protestant party had now a clear course, (for the German bishops who wished for reform proved a small minority of the whole,) and could at pleasure give the sanction of a formal decree to doctrines and practices which had hitherto been rather suffered than ordained. But they were soon again interrupted in their labours.

Ottavio Farnese, dissatisfied that Placentia was not joined with Parma under his rule, and eager to abridge the imperial power in Italy, had solicited the aid of Henry II., Francis's successor on the throne of France. French troops

soon appeared in Parma and Mirandola, and the ancient feuds were renewed with all the more vigour because of the repose which had been allowed them. The pope united his forces with those of the emperor, while Henry II. sought the help of the German Protestants. So formidable did this league between France and Germany appear to both the emperor and the pope, that whilst Julius gave instant orders for the suspension of the council, lest the reforming bishops should seize the opportunity to urge their plans, exclaiming as he did so, "Never could we have believed that God would so visit us,"—Charles was glad to purchase a peace by giving liberty to the princes whom he had lately led about captive in triumph, and by making large promises of religious freedom and peace to the Protestant party.

Always more given, as we are assured by his contemporaries, to enjoy himself than to govern his states, Julius passed the remainder of his days in those inglorious pleasures which had now become characteristic of the papal court. Possessing a considerable share of that elegant taste which the Medici and other noble families had so assiduously cultivated, Julius busied himself in erecting a palace which yet stands at the Porta del Popolo, and is known as the villa of *Papa Giulio*. The designing and building of this edifice, with the laying out of its spacious gardens, were his most serious avocations. His amusements resembled those of his namesake and favourite exemplar, Julius II.,

and mingled gross coarseness and sometimes blasphemy with a boisterous levity. After spending a few years in this vain and disreputable manner, Julius III. died in 1555.

The party which we have hitherto seen identified with the Theatines and the Jesuits had now gathered considerable strength within the conclave itself. In distinction from the worldly party which was exactly represented by Julius II., Leo X., and Clement VII., this might be called the *church party*, because of their more devoted zeal to the interests of the church, and the vigorous line of action they adopted. At their head stood cardinal Caraffa, whom we have already seen originating the inquisition, and vehemently opposing any attempts to conciliate the Protestants. By his influence one of the same party, Marcello Cervini, was now promoted to the papal throne; and he, like Adrian VI., preferred to retain his original name.

MARCELLUS II. assumed the tiara amidst the approbation of the whole Catholic world, and the most sanguine hopes of his own party. "If ever it be possible," said an observer, "for the church to extinguish heresy, to reform abuses, to compel purity of life, to heal its divisions, and once again be united, it is by Marcellus that this will be brought about."

Vain hope! Had Marcellus been spared for years he would have found all this beyond his power. It must be admitted, however, that the few days of life allowed him were diligently

improved, and in such a way as to answer the sanguine expectations of his friends. In his disinterested zeal for the church, and his abhorrence of the selfish policy of his predecessors, he forbade any of his kindred to approach the capital. He vigorously retrenched the expenditure of the court, and devised measures for repressing many ecclesiastical abuses. His first public act was to enforce the solemn observance of the rites of worship, which it had hitherto been the custom to hurry over with the most indecent haste.

But in the midst of these contemplated alterations, which would doubtless have greatly promoted the real strength of the Roman church, and have been eventually directed in full force against so-called Protestant heresies, Marcellus was suddenly taken off by the hand of death. He died on the twenty-second day of his pontificate.

It has been the fashion with those who desire a reputation for candour to lavish high praises on Marcellus. Ranke joins in the anthem, but does not cite a particle of evidence to prove that the pope was a truly pious man. That he was a zealous supporter of the papal system there can be no doubt; but of the wide difference between this and being a Christian, the present work has afforded but too many illustrations. The popedom of Marcellus, also, was too brief to permit us to form any accurate judgment of his character from his deeds.

CHAPTER XV.

PONTIFICATE OF PAUL IV. TO THE BATTLE OF
ST. QUINTIN.

A.D. 1555—1557.

FOR centuries, the policy of the popes and of the whole Roman court had been that of expediency, worldliness, and self-indulgence. The tide had now fairly turned, and a RE-ACTION had set in. Under the former *régime*, the spiritual influence of the church had rapidly dwindled away; but a party had now arisen that undertook to restore it—a party called into existence by the just clamours of the world, and by the dangerous rivalry of a Protestant church. Under Paul III. this party had matured its plans, and collected its munitions of war, its Jesuits, and its inquisition. In raising Marcellus to the popedom, they discovered their readiness to assume the reins of power, and they now prepared to launch the thunders they had so silently and secretly forged. The hand, also, that had raised Marcellus to the throne now grasped the tiara for itself, and Giovanni Piero Caraffa came forth from the conclave, bearing the title of PAUL IV.

To a pontiff of high-church propensities, the rival, and sometimes conflicting claims of his secular and his spiritual offices, must have often proved bewildering. Desirous of being a potent sovereign in the councils of Europe, and also of increasing the influence of the Romish church in every land, he would often find it vexatiously

embarrassing to keep both ends in view. On Paul IV. these difficulties produced a very striking effect. His ascension to the throne was hailed by the church party with acclamations of unfeigned joy, for they reasonably thought that a churchman so zealous, a cardinal so austere and devout, would most efficiently work out their scheme for papal aggrandizement. But so entirely was the balance of Caraffa's mind upset by the novel circumstances of his position, that for a long time he almost lost sight of those defects which he had been accustomed all his life to bemoan, in his eagerness to extend the temporal domains of the church. A worldly spirit quite overcame the superstitious and bigoted spirit which usually governed him.

"How would your holiness wish to be served?" was the question addressed to him by his chamberlain. "As becomes a great prince!" was the haughty reply. And in this mood did Paul continue throughout the first half of his pontificate. His coronation was celebrated with unusual pomp, and to the foreign ambassadors who came to congratulate him on his accession he behaved with supercilious *hauteur*, "thundering in their ears that he was superior to all princes, that he would admit none of them on a footing of familiarity, and that he had ample power either to bestow kingdoms or to take them away."

These sublime pretensions, worthy of Hildebrand himself, Paul soon set himself to enforce.

Although nearly eighty years old, his deep-set eyes still retained all the fire of his youth, his tall spare form seemed instinct with energy, and his walk was yet firm and quick. He was one of those men who are born to command, and whose imperious will, when once opposed, must either break forth in vengeful fury on the adversary, or roll back its burning tide on its unhappy possessor.

There can be no doubt that Paul sincerely intended on his accession to commence a reformation of the church, according to his poor notions of what reformation was. As for doctrine, he wished for none other than that already taught; but he desired that a far different manner of life should be adopted by the clergy, so that their influence over the laity might be maintained and increased. In his first bull he vowed that he would make it his "first care that the reform of the universal church and of the Roman court be at once entered on." He appointed also a congregation for the promotion of reforms, and sent two monks into Spain, with full powers to re-establish good discipline in all the convents of that kingdom. Especially did he breathe vengeance against *heretics*, whether Protestant or others. The inquisition which he had been the means of reconstructing under Paul III., was now set upon a broader and firmer basis; and so zealous was the pontiff for its success, that whatever other business he neglected, and although he often forgot the meetings of the consistory, he never throughout

his reign once missed attending the Thursday meetings of the holy office.

But a surprising change came over the new pontiff's mind as soon as his attention was turned to political questions. Like Julius II. Paul was a patriotic Italian, and he had always viewed with jealousy the growing power of the emperor in Naples and Milan. He was old enough to remember the independence of Italy prior to the invasion of Charles VIII. "*Then,*" he would say, "our country was a well-tuned instrument; Naples and Milan, Venice and the States of the church were strings of delightful accord; but now that harmony is broken, and all through the base machinations of those lost and accursed spirits, Alfonso of Arragon and Ludovico Sforza of Milan."

To this dislike of all foreign interference in Italian affairs, was joined in the mind of Paul a fierce personal hatred to the emperor. Charles knew well the character of the proud Caraffa. He had once expelled him from the council of Naples, and had decreed that he should never hold office in that kingdom. He now openly complained that a cardinal so hostile to himself had been raised to the pope-don. And the imperialists in Italy, aware of their royal master's indignation, began immediately to plot and cabal, and even dared to begin hostilities, by carrying off from the harbour of Civita Vecchia some ships which they claimed as their own.

An outrage like this was all that was needed

to kindle to a flame the fire which was already smouldering in the bosom of Paul. Always intemperate of speech, he gave the most vehement expression to his wrath. Sitting at table he would drink much more than he would eat, his beverage being a strong, brisk, black wine, "so thick that one might almost cut it," called *mangiaguerra*, or champ-the-war. Then, heated with his fiery potations, he would continue for hours declaiming against the emperor, and declaring that "Charles wanted to finish him by a kind of mental fever, but that he would nevertheless contend with him in open fight, and with the help of France would yet free Italy from the tyranny of Spain. French princes should ere long sit on the thrones of Naples and Milan, and he would sweep away from the Italian soil that scum of the world, that evil generation of Jews and Moors, those schismatics and heretics accursed of God, the Spaniards. The time was come for the emperor Charles and his son, king Philip, to receive the punishment of their crimes, and he himself would inflict it. God would support him in this, and the promise would receive its fulfilment—'Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.'"

These ravings, wild as they may seem, were accompanied by corresponding deeds. The avowed imperialists, from the cardinal to the monk or serf, were all put under arrest. If they fled, their property was seized and confis-

cated to the state. The pope next entered into negotiation with France, and secured the alliance of the duke of Ferrara. In a formal process of law, he roundly threatened both Charles and Philip with excommunication, and to release their subjects from their oaths of allegiance. All necessary preparations were made for a general war, and Italy seemed doomed to witness new scenes of carnage and ruin.

But this absorption of the pontiff's whole soul in political affairs led to other actions equally at variance with his professed principles and the tenor of his former life. None among the cardinals had so unsparingly denounced the pontifical vice of nepotism as had cardinal Caraffa. Yet even to this weakness was Paul IV. now seen to abandon himself as thoroughly as any of his predecessors. He had one nephew, Carlo Caraffa, who had passed all his days amidst the excesses and vices of camps. Paul himself had often declared of him, that "his arm was dyed in blood up to the elbow." Yet this man did he now promote to the rank of cardinal, and to the responsible position of chief counsellor and confidant in all his political intrigues. "Never," he now averred, "had the papal seat possessed a more efficient servant." He made over to this favourite by far the greater part of all the administration, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs.

The arts by which Carlo had so won upon the esteem of the pope were soon adopted by

the rest of the family. They, like their worthy pattern, now vowed vengeance against Spain and the emperor, and put on the grimaces of a devotion which in their hearts they derided and detested. Carlo carried his hypocrisy so far as to contrive that the pope should sometimes surprise him in the attitude of prayer before a crucifix, and apparently overwhelmed with agonies of penitent grief.

Deceived by such pretences, the aged pope surrendered himself almost implicitly to the guidance of his nephews. Declaring that the Colonnas were "incorrigible rebels against God and the church," he divided amongst his family the whole possessions of that noble and ancient house, making the elder of his nephews duke of Palliano, and the younger marquis of Montebello. The Caraffas now indulged the most ambitious hopes ; they thought of intermarrying with ducal and even royal houses ; and when one of them uttered some jest about a child's jewelled cap, the mother of the nephews exclaimed, "This is no time to be talking of caps but of *crowns*."

The war with the emperor had now commenced in good earnest. On the imperial side the duke of Alva commanded, having obtained, besides the alliance of several Italian nobles, the valuable services of Marc Antonio Colonna, one of the best soldiers of his age, and whose animosities were now passionately directed against the pope, because of the late aggressions on his house.

Paul also sought to strengthen himself by alliances. The French king sent him ten thousand foot, with a less numerous but very brilliant body of cavalry. The most efficient, however, of all the soldiers in the pontiff's army were Germans and Protestants! It is even said that Carlo Caraffa established a very close intimacy with that great Protestant leader, the margrave Albert of Brandenburg. Nay, Paul went yet further, and solicited the aid of the sultan himself, imploring him to throw his troops in full force upon the Two Sicilies whilst this war was going forward. So little did the religious scruples of even a bigoted and so-called *reforming* pontiff interfere with the prosecution of his worldly designs! So ready was even a Paul IV. to sacrifice his spiritual duties to his temporal ambition!

No great decisive battle was fought on Italian ground throughout the whole of this contest. The duke of Alva stood mostly on the defensive, for he well knew that the Neapolitans would not revolt so long as he could retain the attachment of the leading barons; and this he secured by favours, bribes, and promises. He had ample resources for all this; and besides foreign contributions, he seized all the ecclesiastical revenues on their passage to Rome, and poured them right gleefully into his military chest. Even the gold and silver of the churches, and the consecrated bells of the city of Benevento, did this devout Catholic devote to the purposes of war. He quickly

invested all the country round about Rome, and it would have been easy for him, if so minded, to have speedily terminated the struggle.

But it was on the frontiers of France and the Netherlands that this conflict was to be decided. Charles knew that the pontiff had no power but such as he borrowed from his allies, and it was therefore against France, the chief of these allies, that he once more directed his arms. The battle of St. Quintin, fought on St. Lawrence's day, 1557, gave a complete victory to the imperial banner. The French army was so utterly routed, and the havoc so ruinous to France, that the battle of St. Quintin has been classed with those of Cressy and Agincourt. Whilst only eighty men fell on the imperial side, the French lost four thousand, including their best generals and the flower of their nobility. Exultation was as clamorous on the one side, as the wailing of woe and despair upon the other. Philip of Spain, in an ecstasy of joy, vowed to build, in honour of St. Lawrence, a monastery, a church, and a palace; all which he soon afterwards combined in one plan, designing the great palace of the Escorial, still the most magnificent in Europe, in the form of a gridiron, in memory of its patron saint.* The French monarch, Henry II., shut himself up in Paris; and all France trembled lest the enemy should immediately march

* St. Lawrence is said to have been roasted to death on a gridiron.

upon that capital, which was just then so ill-fortified and defenceless, that it must have fallen an easy prey.

In this emergency the French troops were hastily withdrawn from Italy. The duke of Guise, who commanded them, declared that "no chains would now avail to keep him there," and hurried with all his forces to the aid of his embarrassed sovereign, leaving the pontiff to fight his own battles.

All Rome was now in alarm. The imperialist forces were rapidly approaching the walls, and the citizens were once more threatened with conquest and plunder. Lights were kept burning in the windows and streets for many successive nights with the absurd notion of scaring away the invaders; and the people, heartily wishing the pope in his grave, besieged him with entreaties and demands that the Spanish army should be forthwith admitted that they might escape the horrors of a siege.

Not till the last moment did Paul relent from his mortal hostility to the Spaniards. But when he did consent to enter into treaty with the conqueror, he received far more favourable terms than he had any right to expect. All that had been taken from the church was readily restored, and the duke of Alva coming to Rome, kissed with profound reverence the foot of his conquered foe, saying that he had never feared the face of man so much as he did that of the pontiff.

Thus the vehement resentments and deter-

mined hostility of Paul IV. were all thrown away. Baffled in every effort, he henceforth abandoned the struggle, and cared little for political affairs during the remainder of his life.

CHAPTER XVI.

PONTIFICATE OF PAUL IV.—DEVELOPMENT OF THE
RE-ACTION.

A.D. 1557—1559.

BUT the remainder of Paul's life was not inactively spent. Finding it useless to think of ejecting the imperial power from Italy, he turned again to his original designs for reforming the clergy, extirpating heresy, and by every means strengthening the papal rule over the consciences of men.

To the accomplishment of these objects he found, however, a great obstacle where he least expected it, and the manner of his removing that out of his path was highly characteristic of this energetic and resolute old man. As long as his whole mind was occupied with political and military matters, he had found his nephews, and especially cardinal Caraffa, so useful, indeed so essential, to his schemes, that he could only think of them with the highest regard. In his view they were the very choicest and most dutiful sons of the church. But now, on turning his attention to reforms of the church and to its general condition, his ears were saluted with loud murmurs respecting the con-

duct of these nephews, who were, in truth, leading most abandoned lives, and deceiving the aged pope with the grossest artifices of hypocrisy. Entering one day very suddenly the apartment of the cardinal, who professed to be ill, Paul found him conversing with some people of the worst character, and in a moment perceived the whole meaning of the rumours he had heard. "I there saw things," he afterwards said, "that opened a wide field before me."

A searching investigation followed, which disclosed enormities that were hardly credible to the pontiff's ears. Agitated with vexation and rage, the old man shut himself up in his chamber, refused all food, and was unable to sleep; a fever almost consumed him. But at length he resolved that the reforms he had contemplated when he ascended the throne should immediately commence, and should begin with his own kindred. He deprived his nephews of all their offices, and condemned them with their families to perpetual exile. The mother of the nephews, now seventy years of age, fell at the pontiff's feet as he entered his palace entreating for them, but he rudely repulsed her. The young wife of one of them hastened to Rome, hoping to prevail with the pope although others had failed; but on reaching the city she found her own palace closed against her, and that orders had been given to all innkeepers to refuse her admission. The night was rainy and cold, but none dared give

her shelter, and she wandered through the streets in distress, till an innkeeper, in an obscure quarter which the pope's orders had not reached, permitted her to lodge beneath his roof.

From this time the pontiff would hold no intercourse with any of his kindred. Their very names were forbidden to be mentioned in his presence. Paul seemed to forget that he had connexions of any kind in the world, and, old as he was, devoted himself with untiring energy to the task he had set himself to perform.

Having thus commenced the reform in the highest places, he carried it out consistently to the very lowest. All secular offices whatsoever were transferred to other hands, for it was taken for granted that the administrators of them had hitherto been corrupt. No excuses and no delays were allowed. If the new governor of a town arrived at midnight, he instantly summoned the officers, and arrested his predecessor. Not only were officers changed; alterations of the utmost importance were made in the system of conducting affairs. Economy, punctuality, and dispatch, were required of all, and the pope endeavoured to acquire for himself a high reputation for justice by establishing a chest, the key of which he only kept, and in which all complaints that the people desired to make might be deposited for his private perusal.

With equal rigour a similar reform was

extended to all ecclesiastical posts. Service was ordered to be performed with more care in all churches. Pomp was added to the ceremonial, and magnificence to the edifices of worship. "To Paul iv.," says Ranke, "we are indebted for the rich ornaments of the Sistine Chapel, and for the solemn representation of the Holy Sepulchre." Protestant readers will hardly recognise the obligation, and will not think much more highly of Paul, because he strove to attain that "ideal of the Catholic service of the altar, full of dignity, devotion, and splendour, which ever floated before his eyes." To a simple and scriptural faith, such vain pomps are rather hindrances than aids to devotion.

Amongst the monks, also, a more strict discipline was now introduced, and those especially who, like Luther, had deserted their monasteries, were hunted out and expelled from the papal states. To the priesthood all begging and collecting of alms for masses was forbidden, and Paul had a medal struck in his own honour, representing Christ driving the money-changers out of the temple. His efforts to strengthen the hold which the church still possessed on the superstitions of the people were unremitting, and he boasted that there was no longer any need of a council, as he allowed no day to pass by without the promulgation of some edict for the purifying of the church. But what a miserable purity was that which cared not how unregenerate and depraved the heart might be, provided the forms of the ritual were decently

observed ! Yet this is the highest form of purity ever aspired to by Rome.

Above all things the inquisition occupied the anxious thoughts of the pontiff. It was Caraffa, it will be borne in mind, who urged Paul III. to revive this cruel institution, and he now followed up his original designs with all the energy and fierceness of his nature. He subjected new classes of offence to its jurisdiction, and barbarously authorized the employment of torture for the detection of accomplices. "The inquisition," said Paul, "is the only means of destroying heresy, and the only fort of the apostolic see." In that he spoke the truth, and weak indeed must be the cause that needs such defences !

How terrible, too, were the munitions and machinery of this infamous "fort !" The first proceeding was to seize the suspected man without notice, and often in the dead of night. Hurried away from the embraces of his family, who felt that they were bidding him a final farewell, he was immersed in a dark cell, sometimes under the bed of a river, at others beneath the suffocating roof of a garret, and where the furniture consisted of but two pots of water, one for washing, and the other to allay his feverish thirst. On being summoned to trial, the prisoner was conducted, bare-headed, and with naked legs and feet, to a large subterraneous chamber, far out of hearing from all inhabited apartments, and there confronted with his judges, tormentors, and execu-

tioners. At the upper end he saw a huge crucifix, beneath which sat the grand inquisitor at the head of the table, surrounded by his assistants. He then underwent a searching examination as to his birth, education, and manner of life, and if he persisted in asserting his innocence of the crimes alleged against him, he was handed over to the executioner. This officer, dressed in a black gown and cowl, which entirely enveloped his features, except where his eyes glared through two holes cut for the purpose, silently took charge of the prisoner, and calmly proceeded to his task of cruelty and blood.

Three kinds of torture were employed, the pulley, the rack, and the fire. By the *pulley*, the sufferer was raised some yards from the ground, his feet being shackled and loaded with great weights. While suspended in the air, stripes were inflicted, and the pulley being suddenly slipped, the wretched man swiftly descended, and was often made insensible by the violence of the shock. In torture by the *rack* the victim was stretched on his back in a wooden trough, having a bar across the middle upon which the back of his body was laid. His arms and legs were then tightly bound with cords, which were drawn tighter by screws till they cut the sufferer to the very bone. Besides this, a thin cloth was often placed over his face, and water was dropped from a height into his mouth, so that the cloth gradually sank down to the throat, and produced the very

agonies of a suffocating death. To these refined devices of cruelty was yet added another, if the man continued obdurate—the torture by *fire*. Here the feet were slowly roasted, and when the cries of the poor victim rose highest, a screen was interposed for a moment, but only that the pain might be increased when the screen should be again withdrawn.

When all torture was in vain, and to extort a confession seemed impossible, the obstinate offender was handed over to the managers of the *auto-da-fé*. Of the extreme publicity and pomp, the cruelty and blasphemy connected with these horrid executions, it is unnecessary to speak here; nor would the doleful tragedies of the inquisition have been at all alluded to, but that no account of Paul the Fourth's pontificate could be complete without it. To such inhumanities, masked under the fair guise of religion, he now devoted his days; and a more melancholy spectacle it is surely impossible to contemplate than that of an old man, bending under the weight of more than eighty years, distracting his brains to find new modes of torturing his fellow-creatures, or fiendishly gloating over the horrors of an *auto-da-fé*; and all this in the name of that Saviour whose gospel is so utterly opposed to violence as a means of disseminating its truths.

Absorbed in these pursuits, Paul forgot all his schemes of political ambition. His sole object now was to diffuse a rigid austerity among the clergy, in which he was powerfully

aided by the ardent zeal and subtle labours of the Jesuits; and to root out every weed of heresy, for which purpose he organized and matured the system of the inquisition. At length, in 1559, he was laid prostrate by disease. Calling his cardinals around his bed, he bade them pray for his soul, and take earnest heed of the holy see and of the inquisition. With these admonitions on his lips, the proud and implacable pontiff breathed his last.

Notwithstanding the zealous exertions of Paul iv. in behalf of the church, the papal influence suffered enormous losses during his reign. His haughty behaviour had quite alienated the English nation, and his animosity against the emperor's son, Philip II. of Spain, who, by virtue of his marriage with queen Mary, was also king of England, had brought the royal family and the aristocracy to sympathize with the movement that had long been going forward amongst the people. "At the close of Paul's pontificate," observes Ranke, "Great Britain, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, had wholly forsaken the Roman see; Germany was almost entirely Protestant; Poland and Hungary were in a fierce tumult of opinion; Geneva was as important a centre for the schismatics of Latin descent as Wittemberg was for those of the Germanic race; while numbers were already gathering beneath the banners of Protestantism in the Netherlands and France." And not the least instructive lesson connected with this is the obvious fact

that all the injuries thus sustained by the pope-dom were mainly produced by its own blind and obstinate persistence in its unrighteous and truth-destroying policy. So God in his good providence had graciously arranged it.

On the other hand, there were now within the papacy indubitable signs of returning strength. Paul had infused more decency and more vigour into all administrations, both ecclesiastical and secular. There was much less to shock the moral sense of mankind in the new deportment of the Roman priesthood; and helped by the stealthy Jesuits, who were daily increasing, and by the strong arm of the inquisition, it was yet possible for the papacy to maintain its position, if not to retrieve its losses.

CHAPTER XVII.

PONTIFICATE OF PIUS IV.—THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.
A.D. 1559—1565.

THE successor of Paul IV. was a man of so opposite a character that it seemed for a time doubtful whether the course of events would continue in the same channel. But it seldom happens that a single individual, however exalted his position, can materially affect, much less withstand or alter, the prevalent spirit of his age; and the new pope was no exception to the rule.

PIUS IV. could not boast of noble descent.

Although a Medici by name, he had no connexion with the illustrious Florentine house that had already placed two of its members on the papal throne. His father was a tax-gatherer at Milan, whose resources were so small that he was scarcely able to educate his sons. The elder of these, by his reckless daring, and a conscience that shrank not at any crime, (for he was in truth a mere bravo,) had gained the friendship of the notorious Pier Luigi Farnese, and by marrying that prince's wife's sister, was enabled to advance his brother Giovanni, hitherto a practitioner of the law, to the high rank of cardinal.

By Paul iv. the cardinal Medici had been held in extreme dislike. His low birth, his love of sensual indulgence, his aversion to all harshness and cruelty, aroused the spleen of the vehement and zealous Paul; but perhaps it was the possession of these very qualities, combined with his liberal promises, that secured him the favour of the conclave, as they had already made him the idol of the people, who called him "The Father of the Poor."

Animated by these dispositions, Pius, on ascending the throne, resolved that his reign should not be disgraced by the strifes and agitations which had marked that of his predecessor. He was bent on having, if possible, an easy and pleasant life; and observing that the ambition of former popes had thrown them upon seas of trouble, alienating from the church those princes who were naturally disposed to

give it their strongest support, he determined that no such ambition should tempt him to forsake a policy of peace and conciliation. It had been the full conviction of Paul iv. that a pope was created for the subjugation of emperors and kings; and it was thus that he plunged himself and the church into so many wars and calamities. "Thereby," would Pius iv. often say, "did we lose England—England, that might have been retained with perfect ease. Thus, too, has Scotland been torn from us; and during the wars excited by Paul's severities the doctrines of Germany made their way into France."

If he had been left wholly to himself, therefore, the new pontiff would probably have led a life like that of Leo x. He would have interfered as little as possible with others, and would have only demanded to be allowed to enjoy himself without interruption. But the current of opinion had now fully set in for reforming (after the Roman fashion) and invigorating the church, and especially defending it against heretical assaults. Moreover, one of the pope's own nephews, Carlo Borromeo, to whom he entrusted the chief conduct of affairs, was strongly tinctured with the prevailing views. Of this man his contemporaries—not perhaps the best judges of morality or of religion—speak in the highest language of applause. "In so far as we know," says one, "he is without spot or blemish. So religious a life, and so pure an example, leave the most exact-

ing nothing to demand. It is greatly to his praise, that in the bloom of youth, nephew to a pope whose favour he entirely possesses, and living in a court where every kind of pleasure invites him to its enjoyment, he yet leads so exemplary a life." Of any praise justly due to him we have no right and no wish to defraud him ; but one thing is certain, that the Roman Catholic church would never have *canonized* this Borromeo for purity and piety, if he had not been equally distinguished for zeal in defence of her forms, her supremacy, and even her vices.

Under the guidance of this man, the public policy of Pius iv. very nearly resembled that of his forerunner. Indeed, his first act was one of severe justice towards the nephews of Paul. Although that pope had banished them from Rome, they had still continued their criminal practices in other parts of Italy, and on the death of their uncle they had returned to Rome, hoping that their past misconduct would be either forgotten or overlooked. But a strict investigation was now set afoot. They were accused of the most detestable crimes ; robberies, forgeries, and assassinations. At the close of a long day's trial, the pontiff condemned both the duke and the cardinal, and the sentence of death was immediately put in execution.

There was now a general outcry that the sittings of the council at Trent ought to be speedily resumed. The French were even threatening to convoke a national council,

which might possibly have led to a schism. Averse as the popes always were to the intrusion of inferior prelates on what they regarded as their own exclusive province, the jurisdiction of the whole church, Pius found it was absolutely necessary to convene such a council at the present time. He had no decent pretext for refusing it ; and so putting a good face on the matter, he declared, " We desire this council ; we wish it earnestly, and we would have it to be universal. Let what requires reformation be reformed, even though it be our own person or our own affairs."

In the year 1562, the Council of Trent did, therefore, resume its sittings. It was fully seventeen years since the assembly had been first convened, and how altered was now the state of the world, as well as that of the Romish church ! There could now be no more any hope of a *universal* council, not even of the western churches. The Protestants were irrecoverably gone. All that could be hoped for was to reconcile those prelates, who, without seceding, had yet exhibited much dissatisfaction with the papal see ; to bind in a closer league the forces that were yet left ; and to assume an attitude of hostility and aggression towards heresy of every kind. All this the council still might, and in fact did accomplish.

But it was no easy task. There were points on which a union seemed impossible. The German bishops wanted a reform of the pope's own department, and in the management of his

court. They demanded that the choice of the pontiff should not rest so exclusively with the conclave. "How is it possible," they very justly and forcibly urged, "that the cardinals should elect a good pope, seeing that they themselves are not good?" The French required that the cup should be given to the laity, that the communion services should be translated into the spoken tongue, and that there should be both preaching and singing in the French language,—all Lutheran and therefore *heretical* innovations in the eyes of Rome. Some contended for the marriage of the clergy, and others maintained that every bishop derived his authority directly from God, and that it was not merely dependent upon the will of the pope.

Thus a council from which heretics were rigorously excluded, was still far from being in perfect harmony. The strife ran higher from day to day. One party flung the charge of heresy in the face of another, and received it back again with double force. Even *out* of the assembly the contest was carried on, sometimes producing actual blows and shedding of blood. The cries of "Italy! Italy! Spain! Spain!" were the party watchwords, which echoed incessantly through the streets of Trent. The pope declared that it was high time to terminate such scandalous quarrelling and such fruitless discussion, and resolved to effect his purpose by secretly treating with the sovereigns of these refractory bishops rather than with the council itself. So completely had religion now become

the instrument of state policy, that the pope knew he should most effectually influence the council, and so, forsooth, decide what should be the creed of the church, by appealing to the emperor of Germany and the kings of France and Spain! Cardinal Morone was appointed by Pius to discharge this difficult mission, which required neither theological knowledge nor eminent piety, but extraordinary address and diplomatic skill, qualities with which Morone appears to have been singularly endowed.

Proceeding first to the court of the emperor, now Ferdinand I., the cardinal exerted all his skill to soothe the irritation of that sovereign, and to convince him of the pontiff's willingness to do all that was requisite for the good of the church. In short, Morone succeeded with all the sovereigns, who forthwith sent instructions to their bishops and other servants in the council, to maintain a good understanding with the papal legates. Obstacles having been thus removed, the council very rapidly disposed of its business. Articles on which there was still a difference, were purposely expressed with ambiguity; the privileges of the clergy were confirmed; some partial attempts were made at reform; a stricter discipline was established; laws against heretics were renewed with greater severity than ever; care was taken that the rising priesthood should be suitably trained, and especially inured to habits of implicit obedience and austere self-command. But no steps what-

ever were taken to promote the study of the Scriptures, or the preaching of a purer doctrine.

The council did not separate until the prelates had all bound themselves by a solemn *confession of faith*, to "acknowledge the Roman church as mother and mistress of all churches," to "obey faithfully the Roman bishop, the successor of St. Peter and vicar of Jesus Christ," and to receive and to anathematize all things as they are received and anathematized by the Council of Trent.* And thus an assembly, which met for the express purpose of limiting and restraining the papal power, had actually confirmed and extended it, and placed it on a firmer basis than before.

Besides these advantages, another equally important had been gained. The papacy was no longer in direct opposition to the sovereignties of the world. It now claimed them as allies, and could henceforth reckon upon their assistance in all its struggles and ambitious aims. Thus Romanism was once more assuming a bold and domineering attitude, and the pope of Rome concentrated in himself all the powers and energies of the church.

Pius IV. felt that the great task of his life was accomplished when the Council of Trent was thus successfully brought to a close. If, before that time, he had been disposed to self-indulgence, he now became more voluptuous

* *Vide* Pope Pius's Creed—Le Plat's *Decreta et Canones*, Appendix, p. 22.

than ever. He neglected religious service, and addicted himself excessively to the pleasures of the table. He increased the splendour of his court, gave sumptuous entertainments, and erected magnificent buildings. Strict churchmen were much scandalized at the gaiety of the pope; some of the more fanatical even plotted against his life; and the whole reforming party rejoiced when, in 1565, his death delivered them from what they felt as a libel on their reputation, and an insurmountable check to all their efforts.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PONTIFICATE OF PIUS V.—PROGRESS OF THE RE-ACTION.
A.D. 1565—1572.

THE strength of the high church party was now sufficiently matured to enable them to select a pope from amongst themselves. Their leader, Carlo Borromeo, advocated the claims of Michele Ghisleri, cardinal of Alessandria, whose fitness for the office, he said, was proclaimed by his "piety, irreproachable life, and devout spirit." This choice was approved by the whole party; and they who, during the reign of Pius IV., had maintained a sullen silence, were now filled with highest hope. "To Rome—to Rome!" wrote one of them, "God has wakened up for us our fourth Paul again."

PIUS V. was really a man of very similar character to Paul IV. From his youth he had

displayed a marvellous zeal in behalf of the papal authority and against all so called heresy. Invested with the office of inquisitor, he exercised his functions so rigorously that even sincere Romanists hated his name. He was more than once assailed by the peasantry with volleys of stones, and was often obliged to steal secretly from the neighbourhoods in which his tyrannies had been committed.

In his private life, Ghisleri was self-denying, abstemious, and austere. On becoming a cardinal, he had told his domestics that they must fancy themselves in a monastery; and on rising to the popedom he relaxed nothing of his monastic severity, continued his fasts as exactly as ever, and still retained the coarse shirt which he had worn when only a monk. We are not disposed to doubt such a man's sincerity in the opinions and views he advanced, but we may justly censure the opinions themselves, and the means he adopted to give them effect.

The reformation of the papal court was now commenced in good earnest. The expenditure was the first thing to be reduced. Pius v. wanted little for himself, and although he made his nephew Bonelli a cardinal, he allowed him a very moderate stipend, and would not allow him to be visited even by his own father. All bishops and archbishops were strictly prohibited from leaving their dioceses, and parish priests were enjoined, under the heaviest penalties, both to remain at home and to be diligent

in discharging their duties. The regulations for monks and nuns were equally stringent. Fifty thousand of them are said to have been absent from their monasteries, wandering about Italy. They were commanded to return instantly, and the rules prescribed for their daily life were so much more rigid than before, that "some fell into a sort of desperation, and others fled the cloisters altogether."

The laity were next attended to. By one of his bulls, Pius forbade any physician to visit any patient confined to his bed more than three days without receiving a certificate that the sick man had confessed his sins anew. By another, he decreed that the rich should be punished for blasphemy and sabbath-breaking by heavy fines, while those who had no property to mulct were punished for these offences by being made to stand at the church door a whole day with the hands tied behind the back; if guilty of the offence a second time, they were whipped through the city; and if a third time they offended, they had their tongue bored through and were sent to the galleys.

That such laws should produce a change in men's manner of life was to be expected, but it is equally obvious, that such a change could have nothing sincere or durable about it. In a short time, there was a wonderful reform of external life in Rome, but the hollowness of such a reformation did not escape the thoughtful and discerning. "In Rome," said one observer of these events, "matters proceed in a

fashion very unlike what we have hitherto seen. Men have become a great deal better, *or at least they have put on the appearance of being so.*"

The extirpation of what he deemed heresy was a darling pursuit of Pius v. His treaties with the various states of Italy were almost exclusively occupied with this topic. Duke Cosmo of Florence gave up to him without hesitation all who had been condemned by the Inquisition. Carnesecchi was one of the most eminent of those men of letters who had embraced Protestant views, and although of noble blood, and connected with the reigning house, he was surrendered to the Roman inquisitors, and suffered death at the stake. For such ready devotion to papal interests, Cosmo was not unrewarded, and Pius v., overlooking his gross immorality, and wholly disregarding the rights of the people, crowned him grand duke of Tuscany, in return for that species of piety which in the eyes of the pope infinitely outweighed every other order of merit.

But it was Milan that beyond all other Italian states exhibited a strict conformity to the new ecclesiastical spirit. The archbishop of this see was Carlo Borromeo, who, having now retired from Rome, devoted himself so zealously to the duties of his bishopric, that he was cited as a pattern of episcopal virtue, and ultimately attained to a place in the calendar itself. He was incessantly occupied in the visitation of his diocese, traversing it in every

direction. The remotest villages, the highest mountains, the most secluded valleys, wherever inhabitants were found, were all alike known and cared for. "Yet," says one of his encomiasts, "the most efficient result of his labours was perhaps the severity of discipline to which he held his clergy, and which they in their turn enforced upon the people."

It was by no means enough, however, for pope Pius v. that Italy was once more restored to the papacy; he sought triumphs abroad as well as at home. In Portugal he was secure of victory through the influence of the Jesuits, who had so surprisingly increased as to be able now to control all the policy of the government. In Spain the same end was effected by the aid of king Philip, and the bigoted resolution with which he supported the tyranny of the Inquisition. "One *auto-da-fé* followed another till every germ of the hated belief was extirpated." In France, also, Pius did his utmost, and letters still extant, which he wrote on the subject, give painful evidence of the malignity with which he regarded every form of the so called heretical faith.

France was just then the battle-field of the hostile creeds. The Protestants had greatly increased through the preaching of Calvin and Beza, and under the fostering care of Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre. Although persecuted as in other countries, often dispersed when assembled for worship, and not seldom brought to torture and the stake, their numbers still multiplied until they had become a very

formidable party in the state. At their head stood the prince of Condé and admiral Coligny, besides many other persons high in rank and of notable worth.

The Catholic party was led by the Guises, the most powerful family in France, who aimed at nothing less than governing the throne itself. But in this object they found themselves thwarted by the crafty, licentious, and cruel Catherine de' Medici, mother of the king, who, as Charles IX. was still a youth, was also the regent of France. Catherine, resolving in any case to hold the sceptre in her own hands, leaned sometimes to the Guises and the Catholics, and at other times to the Protestants and Condé. But the repeated acts of violence and persecution committed by the former drove the Protestants at length to open resentment, and the nation was soon divided into two hostile camps, from which Catherine could no longer hold aloof. Thus pressed, she decided for the Guises, and a long and bloody civil war ensued, in which each party was triumphant in turn. Pope Pius could hardly be an indifferent spectator of the strife, and we find him both aiding the Catholics with money, and hounding them on to deeds of the direst cruelty.

When the battle of Jarnac, in 1569, gave the Catholics triumphant predominance, and power to do as they listed, the pope wrote to the king, saying "You ought with all diligence and care to take advantage of the opportunity which this victory offers you, for pursuing and

destroying all the enemies which still remain ; for tearing up entirely all the roots, and even the smallest fibres of roots of so terrible and confirmed an evil. For, unless radically extirpated, they will be found to shoot out again, and the mischief will reappear when you least expect it." To Catherine he wrote in the same strain, imploring her to pursue the enemies of the Catholic religion "until they are all *massacred*, for it is only by the *entire extermination* of the heretics that the Catholic worship can be restored."

It is easy to see from these letters, that if Pius v. was not actually privy to the design which was even then entertained by the infamous Catherine and her depraved and besotted son, of cutting off the Protestants at one blow, this was nevertheless a project which would have met with his hearty concurrence ; and it is hard to avoid the suspicion that the first thought of so terrible a "massacre" as that of St. Bartholomew had its origin, not in Paris, but in Rome.

At England the pontiff could only shake his hand in powerless menaces. Queen Elizabeth had now desisted from that weak coquetting with Rome which disgraced the early part of her reign, and was employing measures of very questionable severity against those who adhered to the ancient faith. Pius returned her hostilities with a bull of excommunication ; and to the discredit of that age it must be recorded, that the man who dared to give it publication,

by affixing it to the bishop of London's palace gate, was first tortured at the rack and then put to death.

For the loss of England Pius breathed his last sigh. He never ceased grieving over it, and contriving schemes for the recovery of the treasure, until death terminated his illusions in 1572.

CHAPTER XIX.

PONTIFICATES OF GREGORY XIII. AND SIXTUS V.—
SUCCESS OF THE RE-ACTION.

A.D. 1572—1590.

THE successor of Pius was a man who would gladly have lived an easy jovial kind of life, if the spirit of the times would have suffered it. But under the jealous eyes of inquisitors and Jesuits, even a pontiff was not master of his own movements, so that Hugo Boncompagno, on ascending the papal throne, was obliged to appear circumspect and grave, and even to counterfeit sympathy with the prevalent sentiments of the age. No sooner had GREGORY XIII. assumed the tiara, than an opportunity was taken by the leading officers of the court, Jesuits and cardinals, of warning him not to deviate from the track marked out by his predecessors; and so completely did they awe, perhaps paralyse the mind of the old man, now past his seventieth year, that he dared not attempt the enriching of his family, (although he had a son on whom he doted,) nor even the

gratification of his own tastes. Not more than three months of Gregory's popedom had elapsed when the world was startled from its repose, and petrified with horror, at a tragedy which has had no equal in ancient and modern times—a tragedy in which the new pontiff bore no unimportant part. When Catherine de' Medici and the impotent Charles ix. proposed a peace to the Protestants, or Huguenots, of France, it was with the deliberate design to inveigle them into their power, and slaughter them at will. For this purpose they feigned a wish to ratify their friendship by a marriage between the king's sister and the young prince of Navarre. An offer so advantageous, and promising such auspicious results to religion, completely deluded the leaders of the Huguenot party, and in a few months the king and queen of Navarre, with all their court, the prince de Condé, and admiral Coligny, with all the Huguenots of distinction, were assembled within the walls of the French metropolis, and lodged chiefly in the palaces of the royal family itself.

All the heads of the Protestant party were thus gathered in Paris by the beginning of August, 1572, and the 24th of that month, being St. Bartholomew's-day, was fixed by the royal party as the day of sacrifice, when a hetacomb of innocent victims should be offered to the Moloch of revengeful bigotry. With the particulars of that awful massacre we need not stain these pages. They are written in dismal characters upon the annals of the French

nation, and in the history of the Roman Catholic church. And as it cannot be proved that the pontiffs had any direct share in it, we are bound to throw the veil of charity over those parts of their conduct which excite our suspicions. But if Charles IX. was haunted to his dying day by the blood-stained spectres of those he had so ruthlessly murdered, so also ought Gregory XIII. to have been stung with remorse at the remembrance of cruelties which were prompted by Roman bigotry, and which he himself had, consciously or unconsciously, helped to perpetrate. The slaughter of seventy thousand unoffending and unresisting victims, some bent with age and venerable with hoary locks, others too young to have even lisped the prayers of a heretical church, ought surely to have weighed heavy on his conscience, and might well have driven him to pass the remainder of his days in penitence and self-reproach.

On the contrary, however, the news of the direful massacre which dyed the rivers of France with blood, and filled the world with fear, was received at Rome with loud demonstrations of joy. Having been expected, it took none of the papal court by surprise. "The king of France has *kept his word*," said the cardinal Alessandrian; and the cardinal of Lorraine, the eldest of the Guises, questioned the messenger for further particulars, to see if all that had been *intended* had actually taken place. Worst of all, the pope decreed that there should be

public rejoicings to celebrate the event ; high mass was performed with every circumstance of pomp and splendour ; and ere the wailing of the widows and orphans of France, crying to Heaven for vengeance, had died away, the solemn strains of the *Te Deum* arose from the choir of St. Peter's, thanking God for the accomplishment of the most monstrous crime which history records. Nay, so unblushing was the effrontery of the pope, that he caused a medal to be struck in memory of the deed, bearing on one side the likeness of his own face, and on the other an effigy of the destroying angel, surmounted by the inscription, "*Huguenotorum strages*,"—The slaughter of the Huguenots.

A reign so wickedly begun was not likely to proceed in peace. As Gregory pursued throughout a policy of rigid persecution and insatiable exaction, so he reaped the fruits in a most unquiet and agitated reign. It was his exactions in particular, however, which brought down this just retribution. In seeking to replenish his treasury, which the extravagance and dishonesty of most of his predecessors had deeply drained, the happy thought struck Gregory that many of the feudal estates and castles held by the Italian barons must ere this have lapsed to the sovereign, either by failure in the line of inheritance or by forfeiture of the tenure. Lawyers were straightway set to work ; flaws in deeds of possession were diligently searched out ; and a system of wholesale plunder was

begun, under the venerable names of equity and law. Castle after castle, estate after estate, were wrested from families which had held them for generations and even centuries. The privileges and charters of cities were with equal recklessness taken away, and their revenues appropriated by the pope.

Such flagrant and daring spoliation could only set society in an uproar. "The pope is a thief!" "To arms—to arms!" were the cries which rang through the land; and very soon the whole country was filled with armed men, plundering or resisting plunder. The old factions were revived, and the forgotten watch-words, "Guelph" and "Ghibbeline," were heard again. A population that had been industrious and prosperous was suddenly transformed into a mass of roving banditti; and a region which had lately smiled with gardens, vineyards, and happy homes, now assumed the grim aspect of a battle-field. Atrocious barbarities soon grew out of such vehement party strife, and the public fountains were often seen garnished with the heads of those who had been taken prisoners and afterwards slain. The efforts of Gregory to extinguish the flame he had lighted proved utterly in vain. At home, his resources were exhausted; and the neighbouring states, incensed at the exactions he had also laid upon them, only derided his misfortunes. Thus did he wear away thirteen weary years, and died unlamented in 1585.

To Gregory succeeded pope SIXTUS V., whose

bold character and distinguished genius have given him a prominent place in the history of his age. By his talent and industry he had raised himself from the lowest class in society to the most honourable posts in the church. His father, Peretti, was only a gardener, and could not afford to give him any education; but when, by the favour of an uncle, the young Felix Peretti had mastered the rudiments, he was quite capable of achieving all the rest without aid from others. When only a monk, he had attracted the attention of Ghisleri, afterwards Pius v., and through that pontiff's patronage, Peretti attached himself zealously to the rigid party in the church, so labouring in the cause that he had well earned before he obtained it the hat which distinguished him as cardinal Montalto.

At the time of pope Gregory's death, Montalto appeared to have but little chance of the tiara. Others in the conclave had far more influence than he. In order to procure success, he has been accused of using means unworthy of his high fame. He feigned, say his enemies, to be an infirm and prematurely old man, tormented with a consumptive cough; he entreated to be left alone in his cell to spend his remaining days in solitude and prayer, and affirmed that he had lost all relish for the world or worldly honours. But if such artifices were not too gross to deceive the astute college of cardinals, it will be readily admitted by every generous mind that they were too mean and

contemptible to be practised by the haughty and daring Montalto.

Elevated to the popedom, Sixtus resolved that it should be his first care to bring back peace to the distracted towns and villages of Italy. To effect this he determined on striking terror into the hearts of the evil-doers; and four young men having been taken with rifles in their hands—an offence condemned by law—they were immediately sentenced to death. The next day was the day of the pope's coronation, and so favourable an occasion was seized by the friends of the young men, who hoped that Sixtus would pardon them. "While I live every criminal must die," was the stern reply; and the bodies of the young men, suspended on a gallows at the bridge of St. Angelo, saluted the eye of the pope as he went to be crowned.

Similar instances of severity followed, and the terror of the pope's name soon spread far and near. On decrees being issued that all barons and magistrates should clear their castles and towns of banditti, it was almost universally done; and when it was further ordained that the price set on the head of a bandit should be paid, not out of public funds, but by the outlaw's relations, the whole population felt itself enlisted in the cause of order and peace. No day passed without an execution; over all parts of the country, in field and wood, stakes were erected, on each of which stood the head of an outlaw. No

governor was acceptable to Sixtus who did not supply him largely with these barbarous trophies. "His demand was ever for heads."

Harsh as these measures were, they proved successful. In the year 1586, the foreign ambassadors arriving at Rome, delighted the pope by assuring him "that in every part of his states through which their road had led, they had travelled in perfect peace and security." Sixtus was greatly aided in these successes by his friendly connexions with other princes. Gregory XIII. had contrived to offend nearly every state and monarch in Italy, and their territories had consequently been places of refuge to all the disturbers of peace who were driven beyond the Roman borders. But Sixtus v. assiduously cultivated the goodwill of all neighbouring potentates, and accordingly received many proofs of regard from the Venetians, the Milanese, and the king of Naples.

Successful in appeasing domestic feuds, Sixtus next proceeded to seek the commercial welfare of his country. He drained several of the marshes at the foot of the Apennines. The Chiana of Orvieto and the Pontine marshes were particularly improved by his labours. To promote an Italian silk manufacture, the pontiff decreed that mulberry trees should be planted throughout the states of the church, five on every rubbio of land in every field and wood, and on all hills and in every valley. Wherever corn was not growing, these trees were to find a place. In ecclesiastical matters Sixtus con-

tinued the policy of the party he had joined, although his natural disposition made him much more of a sovereign than a priest. He insisted, however, that the manners of the clergy should be governed by decorum; and the cardinals, who, a century before, would have buckled on their armour for the field, now led a comparatively learned life in the seclusion of the cloister.

Yet with all this change in manners there is no reason to think that there was any advance in piety or even in morality. The *appearance* of these qualities was necessary to success, but as the most eager struggle after worldly greatness was mingled everywhere with the effort to promote them, the *reality* of either was almost impossible. The highest offices were open to all, and the path by which they were to be reached was that of dissimulation. Pretended devotion to the church, even to rank bigotry, with a ready blindness to all immorality that was not scandalous, were the best passports to favour and honour. It could not but ensue that there should be hollowness, hypocrisy, treachery, ambition, and avarice, flourishing on all sides.

The clergy still found it to their interest to favour the most superstitious errors among the people, for superstition is the chain with which priestcraft binds and leads captive the souls of men. Accordingly, now that the age was "religious," miracles began to be revived. An image of the virgin was heard to speak in the

church of San Silvestro, and the event produced so powerful an impression upon the people, that the region around the church, hitherto neglected and desolate, was presently covered with dwellings. In the Rione de' Monti, a miraculous image of the virgin appeared in a haystack, and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, considering it a special token of Divine regard, rose in arms to prevent its removal. This passion for miracle-mongering once kindled, it soon spread to other countries, and the world was again filled with degrading superstitions.

As the "religious" spirit was thus communicated to all things, the fine arts began to be affected. Tasso wrote his "Jerusalem Delivered," for no classic or heathen subject would now win an audience, as in the days of Leo x. The Caracci and other painters drew ideals of Christ and of the saints, full of devout and pensive feeling. Music received a new direction, and from this period is to be dated that exquisite adaptation of harmony to the sense of words presented in the service of the Romish church. This conquest of the arts, and rendering them tributary to Rome, greatly aided in promoting the re-action which had now so thoroughly set in against the deep tide of the Reformation.

The finances of the church were from the first an object of great solicitude with Sixtus v. By rigid economy and dexterous management he accumulated a large amount of treasure, (as

much, say some, as four millions and a half of silver scudi,) which he carefully preserved in the castle of San Angelo. This treasure was only to be touched on special emergencies. It might be used for a war against the Turks, for the conquest of the Holy Land, for recovering some conquered Catholic province, or in case of famine or invasion.

So much wealth, however, enabled Sixtus v. to undertake many useful public works, and he spent large sums in improving or beautifying the metropolitan city. The want of water was severely felt by the inhabitants of the Quirinal and Terminal hills, and Sixtus conferred a real obligation on the city when he constructed the *Acqua Felice*, an aqueduct by which he brought water from a distance of twenty-two miles. Sixtus himself greatly exulted in this achievement, and felt a just and worthy flush of triumph, when he saw the bright stream diffusing its wealth through his own gardens, and when he placed by the side of the fountain the statue of Moses fetching water from the rock by the potent touch of his staff.

In surveying the relations of Rome with foreign states, Sixtus was concerned, like his predecessors, to see so fair a province as England wholly severed from the Roman church. He fully entered into the crusading spirit of Pius v., and was overjoyed when at last he succeeded in rousing Philip of Spain to undertake an aggressive expedition. It was in 1587 that this armament, styled the "*Invincible Armada*,"

equipped at an enormous expense and protected by a pope's blessing, set sail for the British coast. Sixtus had promised the Spanish king a million of his silver scudi as soon as the first English sea-port was taken. Prudent pontiff! Yet more faith in his own benison, and less carefulness for his purse, would have better comported with his profession. The result of that expedition is well-known. God himself appeared to defend the last asylum of the reformed faith. Before the Armada had touched the land a violent storm arose, and a fleet of one hundred and thirty ships was completely broken up, most of the vessels either foundering at sea or returning home in a shattered and miserable plight. But though this enterprise wholly failed, yet Sixtus v. lived to see the entire success of the re-action commenced under Paul iv., so far at least as respected the checking the further progress of the Reformation, and the restoring of a large part of the alienated countries to the bosom of the Roman church.

In France, the reformed religion had received a great blow by the Huguenot massacre. Still the Protestants were powerful, and seemed so essential to the preservation of a due balance of interests in the realm, that Henry iii. often favoured rather than oppressed them. This soon roused the ire of the priesthood; a spirit of disloyalty was encouraged; and eventually a fanatic, named Clement, found access to the king's private chamber, and there stabbed him

with a poniard. Sixtus did not conceal his delight at the perpetration of this crime. "It is surely the hand of God," he exclaimed, "who thus signifies that he will not forsake either France or his own church!"

In Germany, the Reformation was, perhaps, more complete than anywhere else, but even here it began now to meet with serious disasters. The Roman party had rallied; the increased vigour infused into the hierarchy had inspired it with boldness. And although the Inquisition could find no home in the countries watered by the Rhine and Elbe, yet the Jesuits could do the work of proselytism both more surely and more quietly. Stealthily they crept from city to city, openly avowing their mission only where they were sure of the protection of a Roman Catholic prince. Their schools were acknowledged to be the best for the training of youth; and while their skilful address gave them access to innumerable families, their unscrupulous consciences permitted them to use the most questionable and even immoral means to reclaim wanderers to the fold of the pope. Moreover, whilst the Protestants were divided into Lutherans and Calvinists, the Romanists were all united, and thoroughly intent on the work of re-conversion. Thus we find at this period Roman Catholic bishops in Germany publicly reviving customs that had long been regarded as superstitious, and had sunk into contempt. The streets were again filled with processions; the vesper and matin

bells were daily rung ; relics were once more collected and laid in pompous shrines ; monasteries were re-occupied, and new churches for Roman Catholic worship were built. One bishop alone is said to have founded three hundred, which the traveller may still distinguish by their tall and pointed spires.

But although Rome had been compelled to tighten her hold on her remaining possessions, and had even regained some that were well-nigh gone, there was much, as we have seen, that was irrecoverably lost. Her universal empire was no more. Her dominion over the souls of men had received a fatal blow. Doubtless she had strength enough to rally for a time, but though her decline may be lingering, it must ever be dated from the day of her mortal struggle with Luther. Action and re-action appear to be the eternal law of progression. And thus the temporary revival of the papal power can only be another step to its ultimate dissolution.

Pope Sixtus v. died in 1590. The successes he had enjoyed had induced him to cherish the wildest designs. He would unite all Christian nations to conquer the Turks ; he would capture the Holy Land ; he would cut through the desert that divides the Mediterranean from the Red Sea, and so restore the commerce of ancient times ; or, he would hew the sepulchre of Christ out of its solid rock, and carefully wrapping it round, would bring it to Italy. Success had intoxicated his mind.

At the hour of his death an awful storm burst over Rome, and the superstitious people, hating the pope for his heavy taxation, and marvelling at his glory, said that Sixtus had made a contract with the devil, by whose aid he had risen from step to step, and that the stipulated period having expired, his soul had been carried away in a tempest.

CHAPTER XX.

FROM SIXTUS V. TO CLEMENT VIII.—THE RECOVERY OF
FRANCE TO THE PAPACY.

A.D. 1590—1605.

THE policy pursued by Sixtus v. towards the close of his life had rendered him, as we have seen, exceedingly unpopular. This unpopularity had extended to zealous Romanists abroad as well as at home. At a period when the Romish church was putting forth every energy to recover her lost possessions and destroy the work of the Reformation, the supreme pontiff seemed chiefly intent on schemes of personal aggrandizement, or at best on projects of a mere worldly kind. Instead of following up the efforts of Gregory XIII., and securing the great advantages which the atrocious massacre of St. Bartholomew had placed within his reach—instead of utterly crushing, as he might, the Protestant party in France, or at least lending

a vigorous support to the *League* which the Guises had there formed against Henry iv., Sixtus had manifestly inclined to favour the new king, whose bravery and many noble qualities excited his highest admiration. It so happened, therefore, that notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of the Jesuits, enforced by all the influence and authority of the Spanish court, Sixtus had always wavered between conflicting judgments, and had altogether refrained from active interference in the affairs of France to the day of his death.

With the zealous church party, it consequently became now a point of the greatest importance to choose a successor whose fidelity to the church should be beyond suspicion or doubt, and, after a stormy debate, the conclave elected one who had been a personal antagonist of the late pontiff, the cardinal Giovanni Castagna.

URBAN VII., however, as Castagna chose to be called, did not live long enough to gratify his adherents by any signal proof of his attachment to the church. He died in twelve days' time after his election, and the struggles of the conclave were recommenced. But a second time the contest issued in giving the tiara to a member of the Jesuit party, the strength of which was now well-nigh invincible.

GREGORY XIV., the successful candidate, lost no time in justifying the reliance which had been placed on him. From the first, he resolved that his utmost exertions should be employed

to re-establish the papal authority in France. Writing to the princes of the League, he said, "Continue to persevere, and make no halt until you have attained the end of your course. Inspired by God, WE have come to your assistance. First, we send you money, and that more than we can afford; next, we despatch our nuncio, Landriano, whose efforts shall bring back all who have deserted from your banners; and lastly, we send you our dear son and nephew, Ercole Sfondrato, with cavalry and infantry to defend you by force of arms. Should you yet require more, we will provide you with that also."

In fact, the new pontiff was heartily bent on that which now seemed of paramount importance to the Jesuit and high-church party—the recovery of France to the allegiance of the pope. To this object, which he regarded as a new crusade, and one of the greatest exigency, Gregory was determined to apply all the treasures, if they were needed, which had been so carefully hoarded by Sixtus v. For several months in succession, he sent 15,000 scudi each month to support the army of the League; and he would doubtless have exhausted all the resources of his treasury in what he considered so holy a cause, had not death unexpectedly cut short his bigoted and sanguinary career.

INNOCENT IX., who succeeded Gregory, belonged to the same party, and discovered as much zeal as his predecessor in behalf of its

views, but age and infirmity unfitted him for his office, and prevented his engaging with activity in the fierce conflicts then disturbing the world. Even his audiences were held as he reclined upon a couch; and in less than two months he left the toils and the honours of the popedom to another.

By the election of CLEMENT VIII. in 1592, the papal chair received an occupant of longer continuance, the cardinal Aldobandrino, to whom the possession fell, being as yet in the prime of life. His origin was comparatively obscure, and it was only by the force of a powerful genius and by the most diligent industry, that he had risen to so exalted a post in the Roman Catholic church. On becoming pope, he retained his laborious habits, and despatched the diversified business of his new office with exemplary punctuality. Early in the morning he gave directions to his ministers, and disposed of affairs on hand, and in the afternoon he held audiences of all those who wished for his aid. His knowledge of the details of business was so large and exact, that he often enlightened his ministers themselves in their own particular departments. So active and industrious was his disposition, that when asked, "In what he took most pleasure," he replied, "In *everything* or nothing."

No one could accuse Clement of self-indulgence, or indeed of self-seeking in any way. It is true that this was not wholly meritorious. It was no longer possible for popes to act like

those who immediately preceded the Reformation. The time for such abuses of the papal office had gone by. The pope must now attend to all the onerous duties of his twofold dignity, as the sovereign of a state, and the bishop of the Roman Catholic church. Gross neglect of these duties would inevitably have been punished by the total abandonment of his supporters, of the laity as well as the priesthood,—both of his subjects and his brethren. So that whilst by no means inattentive to the multifarious concerns of the popedom, Clement chose, either from inclination or from policy, to be punctiliously observant of the rites of religion. He daily confessed and celebrated mass, and in every way laboured hard for at least the reputation of piety and virtue.

Like his predecessors, Clement early directed his attention to the affairs of France, where Henry IV. was still maintaining a severe struggle with the princes of the League, and was scarcely able, in face of so powerful a confederacy, to maintain his sovereignty intact. Henry, whose religion was wholly of a political nature,—that is, was ever made by him the instrument of political ends,—was now strongly inclined to conform to the Romish faith. He hoped in this way to conciliate the goodwill of the nation, which was still, by a large majority, subject to the control of the priests. Had Henry been a conscientious Protestant he might, perhaps, have effected as much towards Protestantizing France, as had already been

accomplished in England. It is certain, at least, that a powerful and numerous body in the state who were heartily Protestant, looked up to him as their leader; and how much could be performed under such circumstances, in those days of despotic monarchy, by a resolute and determined prince, we see abundantly demonstrated in the history of our own Henry VIII. But, alas! base passions are too frequently a stronger stimulus than any sense of duty; and thus the English monarch succeeded where the French king so lamentably failed.

During the popedom of Sixtus v., Henry iv. had shown symptoms of a disposition to recant his Protestant profession, but Sixtus placed so little faith in his promises, and was so apprehensive of his insincerity, that he gave him very little encouragement to persevere. Clement VIII. also felt how dangerous it would be to the welfare of Romanism in France if, after being admitted to the bosom of the papal church, Henry should in a few months return to the ranks he had deserted. Influenced by these views, the pope received a messenger whom Henry had sent upon this errand in a very guarded manner; and it was not until there was evidently no other alternative for the French monarch but that of becoming a Catholic or abdicating his crown—not until the Jesuits in France had done their work so surely that there was a moral certainty of Henry's continuing faithful to his new vows—that Clement would consent to receive him to the Romish

communion, and to give him absolution for all his past heresies.

In process of time, however, these conditions were fulfilled ; for, in 1593, Henry succeeded in winning over to his cause the principal leaders of the League, and to accomplish this did not hesitate basely to sacrifice his party and his faith. The tide of fortune immediately turned in his favour ; the whole nation submitted to his authority, (for, bereft of their political leaders, the sincere Protestants were far too weak to continue the struggle,) and, in 1595, the pope's acceptance of his fealty, and the ratification of his apostasy from the Reformed faith, were celebrated in the cathedral of St. Peter. The pontiff sat upon a lofty throne, surrounded by his cardinals, all attired in their most splendid robes. Henry's petition was then read aloud, while his representative, a French nobleman, threw himself at the feet of the pope in a posture of profound humility. Touching him with a light wand, Clement pronounced his absolution, and then bade him arise.

Thus far had the Jesuits successfully carried their enterprise of counteracting the effects of the Reformation. The recovery of France was the greatest of their triumphs. To lose France would have been the severest blow possible to the papacy, excepting, perhaps, the loss of Spain. These two powers had ever been Rome's firmest and most important allies, and when there was danger of both of them

abandoning the church, the Jesuits alone undertook to reclaim them. They had accomplished the task in Spain by the terrible Inquisition, and in France by the more subtle means of state intrigue and private education. Great was the glorying of the order, and great it well might be, over these rich trophies of their sagacity, their courage, and their perseverance. Would that such noble qualities had been devoted to a holy cause, and not to the enslaving of the mind and the eternal perdition of the soul!

France being safely restored to allegiance, the pontiff found leisure to attend to the secular and more domestic affairs of the popedom, and, in the course he adopted, betrayed that unscrupulously tyrannical bias which has so generally characterized the popes, and which disgraced Clement as much as any of his predecessors.

The city and state of Ferrara had been ruled for many generations by the noble family of Este; and although the pontiffs, particularly Julius II., had often laid claim to their possessions as an ancient fief of the church, they had been able notwithstanding to maintain their rights until now. Under the two Alfonsos, Ferrara had become the resort of literature and science. Ariosto, Boiardo, and Tasso, have all sung of the beauty, the gaiety, and the refinement which abounded at the court of Alfonso I., and which continued in almost equal measure during the reign of his son Alfonso II. At the

death of the latter, in 1597, he bequeathed his crown to Cesare d'Este, a near relative; and now that the *direct* line of succession was extinct, the papal court resolved on renewing its claims to the estate.

Cesare was unhappily in no position to make effectual resistance. His rights were incontestable, but he was himself comparatively unknown, even to his own subjects, and the princes who might have aided him were overawed by the menaces of the pope. Driven almost to despair, the new duke appealed at length to Henry IV., believing that if he could obtain it, the support of so renowned a warrior would prove of greater force than even papal denunciations, and would inspire his timid friends with courage to undertake his cause. But Henry was just then too anxious to conciliate the court of Rome to interfere in the matter, and the unhappy Cesare was ultimately glad to save himself from excommunication and the spiritual censures of the church by surrendering to the pope both his crown and his private estates. In May, 1598, Clement entered Ferrara to take possession of the government, and Ferrara, deprived of its court, its sovereign, and its metropolitan title, was reduced to the rank of a provincial town.

The popedom of Clement was not, however, destined to enjoy an unruffled course of prosperity. Not long after this important accession to both his power and wealth, his peace was disturbed by contentions within the church

itself. A fierce theological controversy broke out between the Jesuits and the Dominicans, into which, as supreme pontiff, Clement was compelled to enter. His behaviour on this occasion did not, as we shall see, redound much more to his honour than in the affair of Ferrara.

At the commencement of their existence as a distinct order, the Jesuits had adopted the theological doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, who is known in the Roman church by the name of the "Angelical Doctor." Of these doctrinal views the Dominicans had always been regarded as the authorized expositors, and the Jesuits made no pretensions at first to dispute with them this honourable prerogative. They were not then so intent on exalting themselves as on serving the papacy, by diffusing far and wide whatever was accepted by the church as the orthodox creed. But in the marvellous stride made by the new order to the chief seats of rank and riches, a spirit of haughty impatience took the place of their former zealous humility. The Jesuits could not readily brook the assumption of any out of their own order to be their teachers and guides. They found, moreover, or asserted that they found, the Dominican doctrines a great hindrance in their contests with Protestants; and with that disregard of mere truth which has made them odiously proverbial, they determined on rejecting doctrines which, whether true or false, impeded their triumphant march. Aquinas

had taught, and the Dominicans stoutly maintained the very doctrine which Calvin placed in the forefront of his creed, "that some are predestined to eternal blessedness, and others to eternal damnation." This identity of view between a portion of the Romanist and an important portion of the Protestant churches greatly interfered with those indiscriminate and fierce assaults which the Jesuits were wont to make upon the entire Protestant faith. They found themselves sometimes in an unpleasantly false position, as antagonists of uncompromising hostility to Protestantism in every shade and form, yet pledged to the support of some of the very doctrines which Protestants themselves maintained. They resolved, therefore, without demur, to alter their creed; and forthwith adopting the doctrine of free-will, they urged this with all their accustomed vehemence and boldness.

But such a departure from ancient precedent and from the authority of the church, inflamed to the fiercest animosity that spirit of jealousy which the Dominicans had already begun to feel towards the Jesuits. A controversy commenced between them, which was ultimately referred to the pope, who held no fewer than sixty-five meetings, and was present at thirty-seven disputations, in the vain hope of reconciling the bitter disputants.

Clement's mind was secretly inclined to the ancient and more orthodox opinions, and had he been governed by no other consideration

than a regard for what he held to be true, his decision would doubtless have been clearly given in their favour. But Clement had learned, like too many of the popes, the art of dissembling, and expediency was the motive which mostly directed his actions. The Jesuits were now the spiritual army of the church. To their prowess was she indebted for recovering her lost possessions, and by their aid alone could she hope to extend or preserve her authority. Fearful of offending so powerful a body; overawed also by the threat which they now distinctly uttered—a threat always harsh to pontifical ears—of summoning a general council of the church, Clement silently abandoned the cause which his judgment approved, and on various excuses abstained from pronouncing a definitive sentence. The feebleness and vacillation of the pontiff, produced by advancing age, were rapidly bringing on disturbances, both in the church and the state, which he was unable to control, when he was released from the cares of his office, and called to his final account, in 1605.

The century through which we have just passed is in some respects the most eventful and momentous in the annals of the Romish church. At its commencement, she was fast declining in the esteem of the world, because of the monstrous depravity of her clergy, from

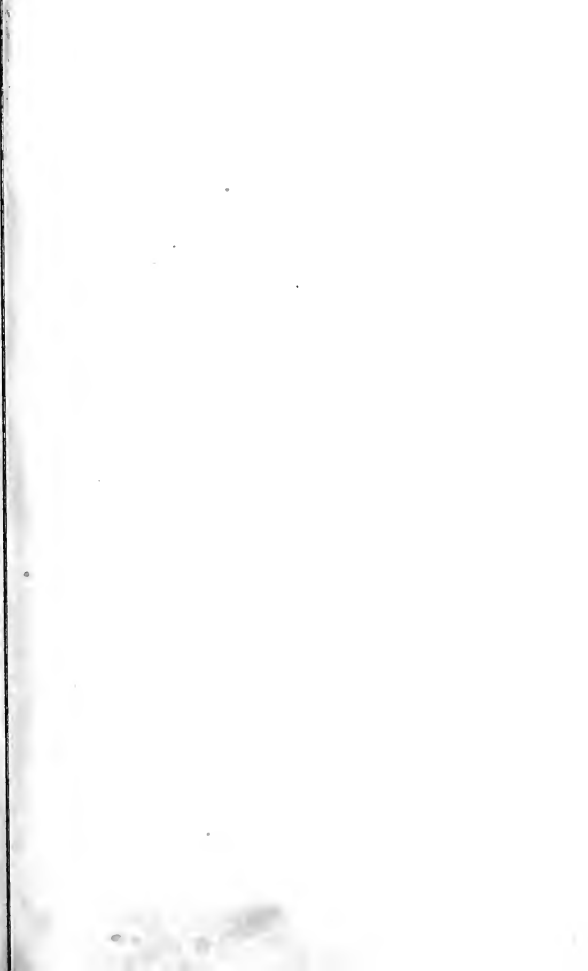
CONCLUSION.

the pope to the priest. When Luther and the first reformers openly denounced her corruptions they found willing and attentive hearers. The doom of the papacy seemed to be close at hand. It is not the express object of this work to exhibit all the causes which prevented so desirable a consummation, but some of the most efficient means which were employed, the labours of the Jesuits and the *outward* reformation of the clergy, have come within its scope, and have passed before the reader's review. The course of the "man of sin" was not yet fully run, and the time has not even now arrived for the perfect understanding of that "mystery of iniquity." The sixteenth century beheld him withered, and drooping, and ready to die; it also witnessed his partial restoration to strength. But it further saw a large portion of the human family emancipated from the bondage in which he had held them for ages, and manfully asserting their right to search the Scriptures for themselves. Liberty of conscience, and the independency of private judgment, are emphatically heir-looms of the German reformers, which, in spite of their errors, will ever endear their names to the heart of the Christian. Viewing the enslaving system in which they had been trained, we should not be so much surprised at the defects or mistakes with which they may be chargeable, as at the amount of Scriptural and essential truth which they were enabled to embrace and uphold. It must ever be remembered that it was out of the church of

LIVES OF THE POPES.

Rome that these venerated teachers of our faith sprang. So from dark caverns do clear streams of water leap forth, at the bidding of the Almighty, to refresh and enliven the earth.







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